

# R U S S I A F R O M   W I T H I N

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF MANY  
YEARS, AND ESPECIALLY SINCE 1923

WITH OPINIONS AND CONVICTIONS  
FORMED IN CONSEQUENCE

By

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TO  
THE PATRIARCH TIKHON

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF HIS BROTHERLY  
KINDNESS TO ME, AND FOR BEING ALLOWED TO  
SHARE SOME OF HIS EXPERIENCES

“THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT”  
ON PROFESSOR PARES’  
“HISTORY OF RUSSIA”

PROFESSOR BERNARD PARES knows the Russian language thoroughly, and most parts of the country personally. He attended many of the Sessions of the Imperial Duma ; above all, he is an ardent lover of Russia and the Russian people, yet he is never unduly partial or blind to the many deficiencies of the tragically luckless people whose history he records, especially those of the governing classes throughout the ages.

Yet it *does not alter his faith* in the ultimate recovery of all that is best in the Russian people, or lessen his love of Russia.



## INTRODUCTION

LET my first words in writing this book be a request that all its readers will carefully distinguish, throughout, between the Russia and the Russians I speak of, and the Soviet Government which controls them. There is great confusion of thought in this country through not making this very important distinction. From the Soviet Government, until it completely changes its policy, I expect nothing at all that will be for the good and advantage of Russia, but everything to the contrary, and more and more surely in this country do we feel that the world itself will gain nothing but harm from Russia's present administration unless there is an absolutely radical change of policy and rule. Russia, itself, and the Russians as a whole, remain as they were, and all I have to say that is hopeful and of promise for the future is based upon my firm conviction, that the Russians are a great people, and have a great country, and that their national equipment assures them a great place in future history. I doubt if there has ever been a time in history when it was so necessary to distinguish (notwithstanding the common saying that a people get the government they deserve) between the nation

and its rulers for the time being, who have managed to get the reins of government into their hands and seem likely to hold them for some considerable time to come. Let me emphasise it once more, when writing of Russia and its people in this book, I am *not* writing of their present Government, and will do my best to make this distinction quite clear as I go on.

It was with even more reluctance than I felt when asked nearly twelve years ago to write on *Russian Life To-day* that I accepted the suggestion this year that I would give some account of my experiences of Russia under the Soviet in book form, and not merely in the pages of a monthly magazine, as I had already prepared to do. I felt that my actual experiences, though quite unique and distinct as they must have been from those of everyone else visiting Russia during that time, might therefore easily be challenged by those who had formed very different conclusions. Those experiences, which of course cannot be questioned, must be left to speak for themselves, and all I can do is to ask for an open mind for the opinions I give, formed partly because of them and partly from what I have learnt from those whose judgment I can trust.

Since 1911, and specially since 1914, I have been regularly in touch with Russia, as Russia gripped my interest and sympathies from the first day I crossed its frontier, and I have carefully kept in touch with Russians in London and the other capitals of Europe,

and especially with those who remain as near as they possibly can to the Russian frontiers.

Every week I receive the latest news from one of the most reliable authorities on present Russian affairs, who reads and studies very carefully the official Press of Moscow, and who has other valuable sources of information, and so I do most certainly feel that I can ask at least a fair consideration for what I have written in consequence.

I have been as careful, as I possibly could, not to bring anyone still in Russia into trouble as having been likely to give me the information out of which I write, and I should like to make it perfectly clear that my reflections upon the present Government are not the result of anything that has been either said to me or learnt by me from our present Administration in Russia. They are honourable English gentlemen, both in Leningrad and Moscow, and incapable of speaking evil of the Government to which they are accredited. That would certainly not be considered "the game" in any British Embassy, Legation, or Consulate, and I have never known it to be done in my fifteen years' personal experience of British diplomacy in Europe.

I have received nothing but kindness and courtesy from the members of the Soviet Government I have known, and while expressing my abhorrence of the crimes which have been committed under their rule, I have not hesitated to speak favourably of some of their aims, even at the risk, which Sir Martin Conway

so strongly felt in writing on the art treasures under the Soviet Government, of being accused of propaganda.

This book, slight in its construction and character, has been written during a time of great pressure, and amid many Diocesan claims upon my time, and in some haste, as I wished to complete it before leaving England for the winter. All that I have aimed at is giving impressions, and I ask, therefore, for a kind indulgence of its many inadequacies and a friendly sympathy with my desire to help my many Russian and other friends to still cherish hopes and confidence concerning Russia.

I have given in Chapter I, a portrait of Archbishop John, of Riga, as a very typical statesman Russian Archbishop at this time. It is impossible to describe what his influence has been during these very troubled years amongst Orthodox Russians in Latvia, and I am proud to remember him amongst my personal friends. I have taken just the same services for him and his people as I have described later on in connection with Moscow, and had just the same tremendous enthusiasm and warm appreciation of my messages of sympathy from our Church and people. The Latvian authorities, I am sorry to say, have not been as sympathetic to the Orthodox as they might have been, and I am assured by his Beatitude, the Archbishop, that my visit to his people, as being representative of England, has made all the difference, and

turned the tide of Latvian feeling in exactly the opposite direction. He even went so far as to assure me that had it not been for my visit, and share in his services and addressing his people, his beautiful cathedral, of which I give an illustration on page 14, would have been turned into a State Museum.

I have given on page 131 a portrait of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth, the Tsar's own sister-in-law, and who was so shamefully murdered about the same time as he and the Empress met their end at Ekaterinburg.

I have given also the inscription on the back of it with the signatures that were necessary even before the Empress's sister could give away her portrait to me. I have given this instance just to enable my readers to understand that even in pre-Revolution days, when the Tsar was supposed to be, and was, one of the most "autocratic rulers in the whole world," yet even the Imperial Family were controlled by authorities and tradition and made to feel themselves responsible to public opinion. My readers will, I hope, therefore, feel as they read the various chapters that autocracy was restricted and held responsible while a tremendous growth of the democratic feeling in every part of Russia did lead friends of Russia to believe in those days that the national movements were all in the direction of a free Constitutional life.

I should like to acknowledge my indebtedness to the publisher of the Russian magazine, *Penzivoney* (which means "The Chimes," and is published in Riga), who very kindly gave me his permission to use some of the pictures.

Some of the illustrations I have given have been published already for the Orthodox of Latvia and other countries, and I am very glad to have had the permission from the publishers to reproduce them here.

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# RUSSIA FROM WITHIN

## CHAPTER I

### HOW I CAME TO VISIT RUSSIA AGAIN AFTER THE REVOLUTION

WHEN I was carrying out my ordinary Visitation of the Baltic countries in October, 1923, nothing was further from my thoughts, as I talked with our chaplain at Helsingfors, than that I should be able, within a few weeks, to be in Russia once more. This chaplain, the Rev. Frank North, was formerly at Moscow, and his name is still gratefully remembered by the many officers, privates, and other prisoners whom he and Mrs. North befriended, and helped during the early days of the Soviet Government. They would undoubtedly have perished but for Mr. and Mrs. North's regularly administered charity, and interventions on their behalf with the Government. We talked of all this, as I have said, and looked at photographs of Moscow, amongst which one particularly interested me, as it showed Mr. North and the Patriarch Tikhon standing together, and had been taken just before he and his wife had left Moscow, and I could see how anxiously he was hoping that he might again see

Embassy, where one of the old Obolenski family was the Minister. The visa was given readily, "Diplomatic," of course, which carried with it special privileges, and a "*Laissez Passer*," which exempted me from Customs examination, and similar papers from our Minister at Warsaw, and with all the good wishes and help the British community could give me there, I set out at the end of October.

At that time, though only three years ago, a journey into Russia from Poland was a real adventure. One had to take everything one needed for the journey, food, and towels and bed linen, everything indeed except water, and there were times before I arrived in Moscow when I wished I had taken that! But the whole experience was full of interest from first to last, and nothing but kindness came my way. At the Polish frontier one had, of course, to change trains, and we travellers had to get Russian money, but on changing quite a moderate amount of English money I was overwhelmed with the quantity of paper I received in exchange. I carried it in both arms across to the train, and dumped it all down on the seat, where it remained, gradually getting less, until my arrival. I had to take my ticket, of course, and when the porter wished for money I pointed to the heap and said "Help yourself," which he did. When the various and necessary demands were made by the conductor for extra fare, for arranging my bed, for the sleeping car, or any other purpose, I invariably said, pointing to the notes, "Help yourself," and this

went on to the end, when it gradually disappeared in a last tip to the porter.

It was an extremely interesting journey, not unattended with anxiety, as I knew that the English courier who had preceded me from Warsaw had been robbed by bandits boarding the train, and who took from him everything that he had, much of his clothing and even his collar. Men with fixed bayonets were in every part of the train, but I do not think they would have been of very much use in warding off a determined attack. Fortunately, however, it was not made! On the contrary, everyone on the train and everyone at the different stations where one got out for exercise was as friendly as in pre-war days. This is, I should here like to say, the chief Russian characteristic—friendliness and kindness. Not only do they possess it themselves, but they look for it from others, value it, and resent its being refused them. When we think of the Russia of the future it may be as well to remember this when we know what its population has endured at the hands of their Government. They are like certain sturdy compatriots of ours in the North of whom it is said that they will be “Led,” but never driven. The Germans learnt this, and were wise enough to profit by the knowledge, in dealing with our prisoners of war. It is eminently true, however, of the Russians.

I had a lesson to this effect early in my Episcopal administration. I was in St. Petersburg, and after a long Sunday service, as I walked back to the

Embassy along the English quay I feared I was going to be late, and so called a *droschky*, telling the driver to go quickly. Driving quickly, however, was the last thing he was minded to do at that time, and we went crawling along, while he lolled about half asleep on his seat. Exasperated (I know it was wrong) I jumped up and gave him a dig in the back, and said, "Get on, can't you!" quite angrily, which was quite enough for him, for obstinately he refused to get on and touch up his horse, and I was very late, as I feared I should be.

A day or two afterwards, however, I was walking along about the same time, and again feared I was going to be late for an appointment, but this time I had my chaplain with me, and so again I said, "Let's take a *droschky*," which we did. The same experience repeated itself, the horse crawled along as if at a funeral, the driver in his thick coat lolled about half asleep; but I, mindful of the night or two before, this time said to my chaplain, "Don't you think you could get him to go a bit faster?" "Of course I will," he said, and leaning forward he whispered a few words to the driver, the effect of which was electric. We shot forward as if in an automobile, and kept at a good pace, and I was in time for my appointment. I at once enquired of my chaplain, "What did you say to him?" He blushed a little and replied, "Oh, well, these Russians, you know, like a little bit of endearment, and so I said, 'Now, little turtledove, just show this friend of mine what

a fleet steed you have.' ” Here let me say to my readers, as I have often done before, if you should have been trying the impatient “Get on, can't you,” just try now “Little turtledove,” and see if there is not a difference. I am quite sure that the only way to treat Russians is to be kind, friendly, patient and even affectionate with them. And this I was conscious of all the way to Moscow. It was the old friendly Russia once again.

On arrival, a few alert-looking Englishmen were there to meet me, boarded the train at once, carried off my bags, and soon I was in a neat-looking car with the British Flag on the bonnet, and speeding through the streets of Moscow, where a car is still never seen except in connection with the Ministries, or some official of the Government. On arrival at the Legation, a very beautiful house, and formerly the mansion of a rich sugar merchant, I found again the Flag flying on a great pole, like a ship mast, outside, and a warm British welcome within, for it was Sunday evening, and already they were arriving for the first service after many years. It was a great joy to me to conduct it. The tears poured down the cheeks of some of the elderly ladies there who had taught English in pre-war days, and been thrown into prison with the lowest of characters, and had passed through all sorts of vicissitudes, and been, as our countrywomen usually are under those circumstances, quite heroines—I am not sure that I could not truthfully say “real saints.” The old hymns and prayers,

and the familiar voice of their bishop touched them very deeply. I do not know where in the world there could have been more real thanksgiving than there was in our hearts that night, the 4th of November, 1923.

The following Sunday was Armistice Day, and I felt it a very great privilege to spend it in Moscow. We had our three services in the Legation—as the church was, and is still, impossible to use—at which everyone was present who could be got there, and I doubt if anywhere in the Empire, though our numbers were comparatively few, the services of that day were kept with more patriotic fervour than in Moscow.

After my first Sunday evening I could hardly contain myself, I felt so full of thankfulness and privilege at having had those wonderful services and been able to cheer and encourage and help those lonely and sorely tried people, but this uplifted state did not last long. I found myself gradually getting more and more depressed as the time went on. I thought it must be the climate, and yet I had been there year after year, sometimes twice a year, in former days, and it was not yet real winter, but at length I began to realise what was wrong. It was the spirit that I felt prevailing everywhere, and that I knew was beginning to affect me, the spirit of distrust and suspicion, of doubt, of watchfulness and spying that one knew to be on every side. I began to feel that the Legation was like some beleaguered fortress, with hostile, and even evil, forces all round



about. The hymn beginning—"Christian, dost thou see them, How they prowl around?" kept occurring to my mind, and the recollection of the little monastery I had seen away to the right when going down the road to Jericho, and where that hymn was first written by one of their number, when the monks were being besieged by the heathen of the neighbourhood. This I had expressed in my letters home, and if I mistake not many of the Staff must have felt the same, though they all exerted themselves to the utmost to keep things cheerful and bright within.

At that time our representation was known as the Commercial Mission in Moscow, as we had no diplomatic relations, but as they were restored under the Labour Government, the Mission became practically a Legation, and Sir Robert Hodgson, who had received his knighthood in the meantime, became, as he is still, *Chargé d'Affaires*. The whole of the Staff is lodged in the one mansion I have already described, and which is really very well adapted for its purpose, both by its furniture and spacious rooms. I did hear, while in Moscow, that its owner had died of starvation and that this was, as my informant said, the regular thing in connection with the seizure of such places and turning them to the Soviet's own uses.

I must venture here to say that I do not think a better man could have been chosen for the post than Sir Robert Hodgson, for his uncompromising integrity and undoubted ability have gained him the

loyal service of all the members of his Staff and (I do not for a moment doubt it) the respect even of the Government. Whatever may be thought of their own methods, I am quite certain that they respect integrity, honesty, truthfulness and straightforwardness in others, and act accordingly. A young member of the Staff expressed all this when he said in reply to my enquiry as to whether they were troubled much by spies. "No, they don't trouble us much, for you see they know we play the game." How much is included in that expression! Does it apply to any other nationality? The Dean of St. Paul's tells us in both of the books he has lately written that when a Rhodes scholar was asked what had impressed him most during his stay at Oxford, he answered instantly—"The fact that there are 3,000 young Englishmen there, every one of whom would rather lose a game than win it unfairly."

It is a great delight to me to think that the Flag flies outside the Legation in Moscow in such a conspicuous place that everyone sees it, and that what that Flag implies is scrupulously lived within and by all the Staff. Sir Robert and Lady Hodgson sit down to all the meals of the day with all their Staff at the same table, and I, of course, shared their hospitality in this way, and the influence of that one room must, I am sure, be far-reaching in the Russian capital. My readers will understand, therefore, what a joy the services have been to me since then and during this very year of 1926, when Sir Robert Hodgson read the

Lessons morning and evening. I have stayed in most of the Embassies and Legations of Europe, and many of the Consulates, and do not think I know anything that is quite like the Diplomatic life, small though it is, at Moscow.

Nothing could be more striking, however, than the difference shown in the appearance of the congregation this year and three years ago, for in many ways things seem—I have to say seem—better, though there is a difference, of course, between June and the brightness of the streets at that time of year, and November, with all the feeling of approaching winter, with poor food and absence of fuel. But this year there was so much more cheerfulness shown amongst the members of our own community, who evidently are beginning to hope that there must be before long a change for the better, in accordance with the old adage—"When things get to the worst they mend."

Economically, things seem to me to be very bad indeed, so bad that the Administration must feel desperately anxious to find some way of making them better. During my stay in the Legation, many people who are visiting the capital in an official or business capacity come and go, and one learnt much of conditions in this way. This was eminently the case in Moscow this year, and I learnt much from a distinguished Canadian who was there to promote emigration to his country. There is a certain sect in Russia, pacifist, industrious and temperate, which is

very much valued in our Colonies, and he was anxious, and not unhopeful, to get permission for many of these to emigrate, as they have already done in past years, both to Canada and the United States. He told me much of the personnel of the Soviet Government, though, of course, I must not mention names, and seemed to have the utmost confidence in their wish to do what they felt best for their country. I cannot say that I shared it myself, though that may be prejudice, but at the same time I can understand how every Commissar and every member of the actual Administration which controls the various Commissaries are above all things anxious to keep in office, and must know that the tenure of that office absolutely depends, in the ultimate issue, on their possessing the confidence of the country, and of bringing it to something like contentment, if not actual prosperity.

The King's birthday party was kept while I was there last June, and I had every opportunity, of course, of speaking to all the members of our community who attended it. The poor ladies who had looked so cast down three years ago had now completely changed their expression. They were really ready for a party, happy and contented-looking, for as teachers of English they told me they were busy from earliest morning till latest night. They could not do all the work that was offered them, for, they said, everyone is learning English in Moscow now, probably, said one, for propaganda, but they

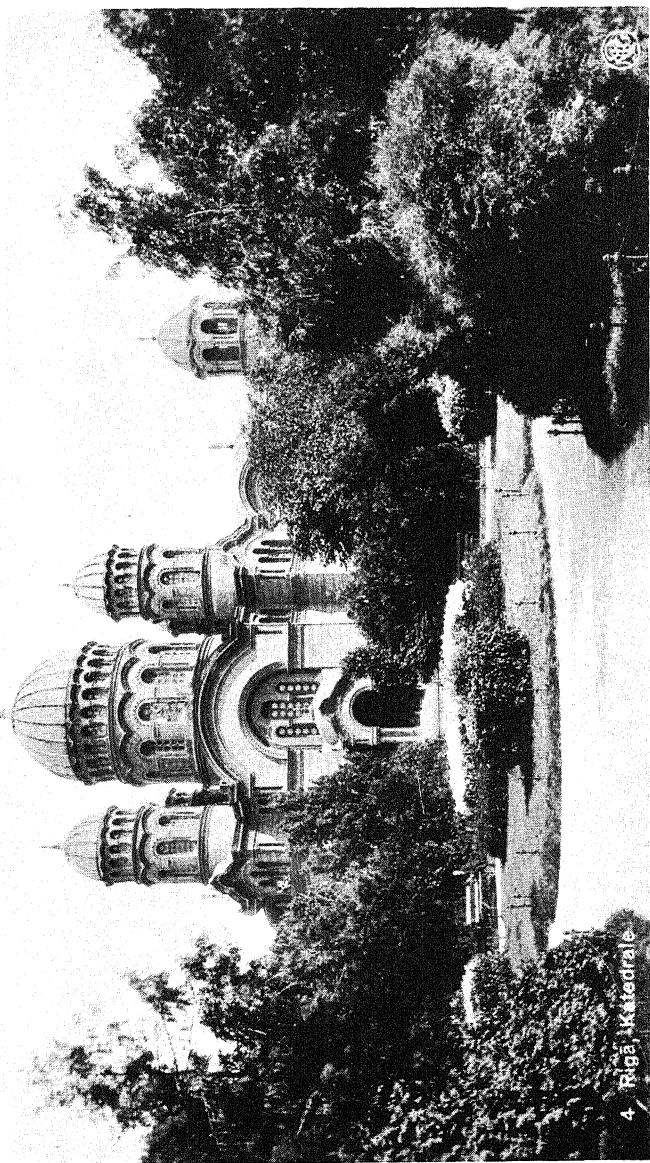
*are* learning it. I cannot think myself, however, that it is merely for propaganda. I believe, on the other hand, notwithstanding the attacks of men like Tomsky, Trotsky and others, that there is both a growing respect for England and a firm belief that they won't be able to improve their own affairs without our co-operation.

I noticed, as I drove to and fro—and I was out daily—in both the old and the new capitals, that people looked with real respect and admiration at the little Union Jack fluttering at the front of my car. If there was any press at cross-roads, the policeman with his baton at once held up the traffic for my car to pass, and the people who were kept back seemed to think it was quite the right thing to do. Many little instances occur to me in which this attention was offered, not, of course, to me personally, as nobody had the slightest idea who I was, but to the Flag, and I do not think I can be mistaken in thinking so. Indeed as I look back to my journeys—and probably I shall never take another—what I always see in my mind's eye in the ancient capital of Russia is that Union Jack outside the Legation, which never goes down night or day, and which represents so much that has been done by British enterprise all over the Russian Empire in the past, and the spirit in which it has been done, and which I feel certain makes many passers-by hope as they look up to it that the same enterprise and the same spirit will play a very

important part in that Russian development which is sure to come.

Since my former visit to Moscow towards the end of 1923, when, as I have said, I took services for the first time after the community had been deprived of them for nearly four years, I have been able to arrange for them to have, apart from my own visits, regular ministrations from Riga and Helsingfors, the chaplain at Riga being the Rev A. R. Harrison, and a more devoted, helpful and earnest clergyman it would be difficult indeed to find. He has also in addition to his own duties at Riga, however—and there has been a large community there for some time and a beautiful church, with much and varied work to do for the community—taken services at Libau, nearly a day's journey away, and also on the Baltic, the former capital of Courland, where, in pre-war days, the chaplain gave his whole time to the work, and with a Seamen's Institute in addition to the large chapel there. Notwithstanding these demands upon his time, being enabled to do so by the generosity and forbearance of his community, who had lay ministrations during his absence, he began to go regularly early in 1924 to Moscow and Leningrad.

At Helsingfors, also, much nearer to the frontier of course, the Rev. Frank North was chaplain, and as he had brought himself into great disfavour with the Soviet Government through his and Mrs. North's persistent efforts on behalf of British officers and men imprisoned in Moscow, and whom he succeeded in bringing out of



THE CATHEDRAL AT RIGA, SAVED FROM BEING MADE INTO A STATE MUSEUM, AS DESCRIBED IN THE INTRODUCTION

[Face page 14.]





the country—services recognised by our own Government with quite unusual generosity—he could not expect a visa from the Soviet Government nor would he have obtained it however long he had lived. He died, however, to our great loss last year, and the present chaplain, the Rev. H. G. Jones, being appointed in his place, and there being no objection on the part of the Soviet Government to granting him a visa, he at once joined with Mr. Harrison in Riga in ministrations to our British community in Russia, the two going alternately. They together have been a real help, comfort and blessing to the people both in Leningrad and Moscow, especially to those who have suffered so much during the past few years. They have visited and cheered them in their homes, as well as prepared candidates for me to confirm in due time. We can, however, have no services whatever in our former churches.

In Moscow in pre-war times we had a most beautiful church, St. Andrew's, with regular services, a large and commodious parsonage close by, and a large library and various rooms for community work as part of the church, a large space where sledges in winter and carriages in summer could wait while their owners—many of whom had driven long distances—were in church. All this ecclesiastical property was enclosed and entered by gates, and was thus a very complete establishment. At St. Petersburg our church was even more complete in its equipments and surroundings, as it afforded very

commodious quarters for the chaplain and his family, and also for his assistant clergy ; a very large library of books (many thousands of volumes) and rooms where governesses, coming in for the Sunday services, could wait between whiles and have meals, as well as quarters for the caretakers and watchmen. The church itself was particularly beautiful (and is still), being formerly the ballroom of the Palace, originally given to the Russian company for the use of our English church.

Built after the style of a Roman basilica, with its large pillars, and recess in which the altar stands, no one would dream that it had ever been anything else but a church, and I look back to some of the most beautiful services of our church I have ever known, both there and in Moscow, and especially at such times as Christmas. When the Soviet Government came into power and seized every vestige of foreign property, they of course seized our churches and everything connected with them. At Moscow, the property was handed over to the Finnish Legation, and as the Finns are particularly friendly to the English, their Minister has, from the day he occupied our former parsonage, considered, as he told me three years ago, that he was holding it as a steward for the Church of England, and would be prepared, at the right time, to give an account of his stewardship. The chaplain's furniture, not suited, of course, for Legation purposes, he carefully placed in the church, where it still remains, and made a careful examination

of all our other church property there. It is not to be supposed, however, that the use of our property was made over to him as a favour to Finland, for a good—probably a large—rent has been exacted from him all the time.

I do not know how much he actually pays in this way, but I do know that for another property used for Legation purposes a foreign Power pays some £2,000 a year to the Soviet Government. Our church property in Moscow, therefore, has not only been seized, but the rent which is charged for it is denied to us. I wonder sometimes whether the amount the Soviet is receiving in this way will be considered as one of the debts due to this country and paid accordingly! One never heard in all one's life of Governments acting in such a way to other peoples and their Governments, and boldly expecting to have good relations with them, and yet making no reparations!

In Leningrad things are rather different, for no use whatever has been made of our church, nor the property connected with it since the British were driven out of the old capital and the services brought to an end. I have visited it very carefully this year, permission to do so being very readily granted, and found all in quite wonderful order. The church in the early days of the Soviet Revolution had been entered by burglars, who, probably surprised soon after they entered, do not appear to have succeeded in taking much away with them, and the front part

of the church, which is on the English quay, through which they entered, has been carefully boarded up ever since. The other entrance, which is from a back street, and by which all the different rooms connected with the chaplaincy are approached, has a porter's lodge and a very massive gate, and so there is no fear of any further burglary.

I went through the chaplain's house and found everything in his study just as he had left it, with the books on the shelves, pictures on the walls, and the chairs in their places. I saw his furniture in other places all labelled, suggesting a list, and the church itself looking as if it had been used for service on the previous Sunday. It is vested, as all other Embassy property is said to be, in the care of an official appointed for that purpose, and who had been instructed to meet me, when I arrived, accompanied by our Consul-General. He very readily shewed me everything and assured me that as far as he knew, except for the burglarious entry, nothing had been removed or injured. Since my return I have tried to get the chaplain's books and pictures returned to him, but in vain. "Everything is in abeyance," I was told, "with respect to enemy possessions, and we cannot interfere with anything until the final settlement." I only wish that I myself could believe there will be any satisfactory final settlement !

Our services in these days, as we have no churches of our own, are therefore conducted in the two Missions, practically commercial missions, in both

the capitals, both of them having very large rooms convenient for the purpose. We have an early celebration of Holy Communion, Morning service and sermon, a second celebration for those who come from a distance, and Evensong and sermon, and with crowded congregations, everyone attending who can possibly get there. We are careful not to attract public attention, and my own feeling all the time has been that we are again, in these days, experiencing what is described in the New Testament as the "Disciples being assembled together with the doors shut for fear of the Jews." Last June, when it was very close and the windows were wide open to give us fresh air, a body of young Communists came down the street waving banners and branches of trees, singing their songs and crying their slogans, but I quickly interrupted the service to close the windows lest we should attract their attention. One never knows what these young hooligans are likely to do.

If my readers could be present at one of these services, and have some conversation afterwards with those who attend them, they would probably learn far more of the spirit of Russia in these days than I can—making every effort of which I am capable—possibly convey to them. The spoken word is always so much more graphic than that which is written. Take an incident like this. At my first visit to Moscow after the early celebration I carefully went round and spoke to everyone. During the service I

had noticed a very tall Russian with a boy and girl beside him, and an old lady kneeling in front of them. I knew them immediately to be Russian and Orthodox, as they stood instead of kneeling or sitting, and when I came to the little group and greeted them, the old lady said, "This is my son-in-law and grandchildren. They are Orthodox, but wished to be present and see their old granny receive Communion in her own church." "Where is their mother, then?" I asked. "She is dead," was the reply, the tears gathering in her eyes as she spoke. "Lately?" I enquired. She nodded in reply, and then added, "Starved to death."

Later in the day when I spoke of this to a number of people present and said how horrified I felt, I was surprised that they shewed so little interest and expressed so little sympathy, though the old lady was greatly respected in the community. But later still in the day, one of them came to me and said, "Please do not think us callous or wanting in feeling because we said nothing this morning. Perhaps we *have* grown a little callous, or if not, become so used to what is the commonest experience amongst us, that now it can hardly be expected to call forth comment." This will probably indicate a little of the spirit in which our congregations come together in Russia at this time, and how much those who are present are feeling that they need all the help God can give them and of which this service assures them.

Just as I am going to press I hear, and for the first time, that difficulties are being made with respect to our chaplain's ministrations. I cannot help hoping that there has been some mistake, for it has been one of the Government's loudest and most constantly repeated assertions that they put no difficulty whatever in the way of religious services, not only so far as the Russian Church itself is concerned, but with respect to all other forms of religion as well. I visited, for instance, this year in Leningrad a rather striking Bhuddist temple and saw not far away a rather attractive Jewish synagogue, and so I am very puzzled by the news that has just reached me, and hope that what has happened has been the result of either misrepresentation or mistake. It is very difficult indeed for a Government such as that now in power in Russia not to associate politics with every activity with which they come in contact, and especially to associate politics with religion.

I doubt indeed whether any Churches except our own are quite free from political aims and interests. The Russian Church certainly in pre-war days had a very marked political character, being presided over by the Procurator of the Holy Synod, always a layman, since the days of Peter the Great. It was, apart from its religious character, a department of the State, and politicians were always considering its relations to other Churches from the political point of view. The famous Pobodonielseff, as I know very well, took only a political view of Bishop Creighton's visit to Russia to

attend the Coronation of the Tzar, though we considered it at the time as an exchange of civilities and friendliness between our two Churches. The Russian Church, however, had nothing to do with it. It was a personal invitation on the part of the Tzar, who already knew Bishop Creighton, and therefore had enquired of the Procurator (the Eye of the Emperor, as he loved to call himself) whether this could be allowed, from a political point of view.

It would seem almost incredible to my readers that the Emperor himself should have to enquire whether he could have his own way, but I am giving a little further on a portrait of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth, widow of the Grand Duke Serge, which she gave me herself and signed, but on the reverse side is the official signature she had to receive before she was permitted to sign and give it me.

I remember, too, when received by the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople, the last time I was there, that he wished me to give a message to the Archbishop of Canterbury, asking him to make some demonstration about the Turkish persecutions of his Greek countrymen; and it was all in vain that I assured him that neither the Archbishop nor any other of our Bishops or clergy could ever interfere in political matters, or make any approach to a foreign Government, condemning its policy. I could simply make no impression upon him, nor upon the other members of the Holy Synod at Phanar. To them politics and religion meant the same thing,



and so every ecclesiastic was of necessity a politician also.

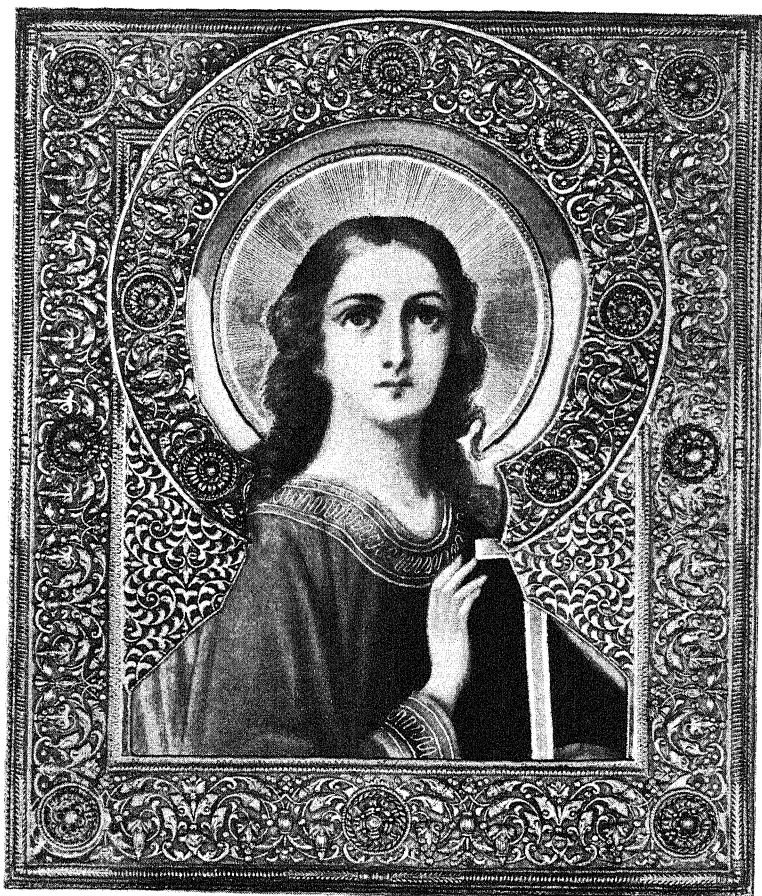
Perhaps this may also be the view of the Soviet Government to-day, though one of the Commissaries in personal conversation gave me the impression that he at least considered that Bishops should not concern themselves with politics or everyday affairs, but should stick to their job, as he would have expressed it, being rather familiar with some of our modern modes of speech and speaking English fluently, and that job was "religious leadership."

## CHAPTER II

### THE PATRIARCH TIKHON AND WHAT I SAW OF HIM

WITHOUT loss of time, after our Sunday services, I went to call at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of which Litvinoff and Tchicherin were the Commissars in charge, and at once realised how false were all the statements which have been circulated in this country about Soviet extravagance and luxury. Nothing could have been simpler or plainer than all the surroundings of that Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Indeed it hardly even suggested that it was any part of the Administration of what is undoubtedly a very powerful Government. A peasant woman with a handkerchief over her head, sitting at a bare table in an ante-room, received our cards—for Sir Robert Hodgson accompanied me—and regretted that the Commissars were absent that morning. We left our written request, however, that I might be allowed, if agreeable to them, to visit the Patriarch Tikhon, who was staying at that time, with Soviet permission, at the Donskoi Monastery, just outside Moscow. Incidentally, here I may mention, lest I forget it later, that my call on the two Commissars was scrupu-





THE IKON GIVEN TO ME BY THE PATRIARCH TIKHON AS A SOUVENIR : PREVIOUSLY  
GIVEN TO HIM BY THE ABBESS OF A CONVENT NEAR MOSCOW JUST BEFORE SHE  
AND HER NUNS WERE TURNED OUT OF IT AND LEFT TO GO AND LIVE AS THEY  
COULD

Святѣйшее Отецъ наше и  
Патріархъ Тихонъ

Настоятельница Пѣгоровскаго Богородицкаго Женскаго Монастыря  
Игуменья Ангелина съ сестрами  
19<sup>14</sup>/<sub>IX</sub> 23 г.

Mrs Eminence  
Rt. Rev. Bishop H. Bezzy

Ваш  
Патріархъ Тихонъ

8 Nov. 1923

THE INSCRIPTION SHOWING HER AFFECTION AND GRATITUDE FOR THE  
PATRIARCH, AND UNDERNEATH IT A COPY OF THE INSCRIPTION WHICH  
HE WROTE HIMSELF, SHOWING IT WAS HIS GIFT TO ME

*To our Revered  
Father and Patriarch Tikhon,  
from the Abbess  
The Sisters Pratozerskaya Bogoroditsky Convent,  
September 14th, 1923*

TRANSLATION OF INSCRIPTION ON BACK OF IKON GIVEN ME BY THE  
PATRIARCH

lously returned within the week, and permission readily granted me to visit the Patriarch. I appreciated the attention all the more as that was one of the busiest of weeks in connection with the observation of the sixth anniversary of the setting up of the Soviet Government in 1917.

Accompanied by a friend, who was to act as my interpreter, we went off on the Tuesday to the Donskoi, a most beautiful collection of buildings, with gardens and avenues, enclosed, as all monasteries usually are, by an outside wall. There were many beautiful buildings round about the church, though the Patriarch was not lodged in one of these, but in the very small gate-house as one entered. This gave us quite a shock, and prepared us for what was to come, for we had been told in this country, as I have said, that the Patriarch was now living in the Donskoi Monastery as though he were very comfortable in some of its many large sets of rooms, while the gate-house is a most confined little place. It is as if one were to say in our own country that somebody was living very comfortably in Haddon Hall, when he was not in the Hall at all, but in the small lodge at the gates. The place was so small that the two or three bishops, who had been hastily summoned, met me outside the door, and remained there, as there would have been no room for them within. They welcomed me most heartily and in the usual affectionate way in which bishops greet each other in the East. I had better not name them, for one is already far away in a very lonely monastery

near the White Sea, and I do not know what has become of the others, nor for what reason the prisoner I have mentioned is incarcerated. I only hope that it is not in consequence of the kindness he showed me, or from any suspicion entertained of what he might have told me. He was, as all other bishops have been, extremely cautious, and said nothing, any more than the Patriarch himself did, that could be considered a reflection upon the Soviet Government. Over a hundred bishops, I believe, have been torn away from their dioceses, and of very few is there any reliable information as to where they are or how they are faring. I fear myself that they are in sad and even desperate case.

The same kind of peasant woman, with handkerchief over her head, was seated outside the two rooms where the Patriarch lived, and ushered me and my friend into his presence. They were two very tiny rooms, the one opening into the other, which was the Patriarch's bedroom, and evidently his only oratory. He himself was simply dressed in a shabby brown cassock, for, as he said himself, he was "very poor," and certainly he looked it. He was seated on a low stool, a very frail, humble-looking little creature, though his keen and alert look, his animated expression, and now and then a little twinkle in his eyes that showed some sense of humour, revealed that his spirit, whatever might be said of his health, was still unimpaired.

We talked of many things, of course, but chiefly



of England, and of how his thoughts were always here, how deeply grateful he felt for our sympathy and prayers, while I assured him that he had them, and not only from the English Church, but from our Roman brethren, and the members of the Free Churches, whose position I tried to explain to him. I told him again and again that he and Russia were in the prayers of all our people, as we all felt that he and his people were suffering for our common *Faith*, and that any victory of the Faith would be a victory for all Christendom. He knew a good bit that was passing, amongst other things gratefully acknowledging the Archbishop of Canterbury's intervention, through Lord Curzon, in his letter to the Soviet, and which had undoubtedly saved his life. He told me that his great difficulty was not knowing what was going on in the world outside, and in his own country, for no letters were allowed to reach him, and no written information, but I rather gathered, as always does happen under those circumstances, that a good deal of information, authentic and accurate, did reach him by those various and unknown ways which are always opened at times of restriction and repression, and upon which many of our own countrymen who were prisoners of war in the enemy's country so long during the war could throw much light.

As the Patriarch sat there, so humble and deprecating, on his little stool, I felt greatly drawn to him by his evident simplicity and spirituality, and said

to myself again and again, "Here is the very heart of Russia, nay, its soul." Many have found their souls in him, and still more have been helped by him to keep their souls. I have known of no spiritual leadership such as that which the Patriarch Tikhon has given to his people, and in which the whole world must certainly share. At that anxious time when the Government were seizing all the jewelled Vessels and Vestments and copies of the Gospels, and many other, almost priceless, possessions, in the various sacristies (I do not know, on reliable information, that they seized any Vessels actually in use), he continually calmed and steadied the indignant people by reminding them—"Never mind just now, that our earthly treasures are being taken from us. They are such, you know, as 'Rust and moth corrupt, and which thieves break through and steal.' Let us all the more, therefore, concentrate upon our spiritual treasures which no moth nor rust can corrupt, no thieves brake through and steal. Faith, Hope and Love, Prayer and Devotion! Let these be our precious possessions which no man can take from us."

Is it possible that such a magnificent leadership as that can be soon, or ever, really forgotten? I was very anxious, and told him so, to be present at some service with him, and suggested the following Saturday evening in the Monastery church, but he negatived that at once and said, "Hardly anyone will be there, because it will be so miserably and wretchedly cold.

Can't you manage the following day, Sunday?" I said, "No, unfortunately, because I must be giving Armistice Day services to our own people, and the afternoon, of course, would be of no use to you." He then remembered that he was to take a service in a very large church in Moscow on St. Michael's Day, and would be conducting the Liturgy himself, and would, therefore, gladly have me share the service with him, and attend officially, representing our English Church. He said, "You will come in your vestments and with your staff, and of course you will wear that 'Tiara' of yours. I do not know what you call it," he said, and then he moved his hands to and fro as though playing a concertina, with a twinkling eye, to describe the way an English mitre shuts up and goes into a very small case. The beautiful crowns, enriched with jewels, worn by Russian bishops and archbishops, are rigid, and of course have to be carried about in very large cases, while our mitres go within a very small compass indeed. I promised gladly that I would, if at all possible, be there.

Again permission was at once asked of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the service carefully explained, as I did not wish to get anyone into trouble after I had gone by its being suggested that I, or they, had done anything without Government permission. The answer was extremely cordial: "Certainly the Bishop can share the service. We shall only be too pleased that it should be so, for we feel that it will do much good."

On the appointed day, a Thursday, after carefully robing at the Mission, we went by car to the great Uspensky church (not the Cathedral of that name), and were received by church officials and conducted at once into the great church where the service had already begun, as far as robing the Celebrant was concerned. This is always an important part of the Liturgy, and especially when a Metropolitan is to take the service. He stands on a dais at what we should call the West end of the church, far away from the Altar, and stripping himself down to his cassock slowly puts on his Vestments, the congregation singing litanies as he does so. When this was completed I accompanied him to the Altar, passing within the gates with him, and then that beautiful, I think I might say, "incomparable," Liturgy of the Russian Church began. The singing was, of course, not quite what one had been accustomed to have in Russia, as there were no boys' voices, but still it was very moving and appealing. All the beautiful Vessels were in use. The attendants wore most wonderful robes; the copy of the Gospels, enriched with diamonds and rubies, was in its usual place, carried out for the Little Entrance, and the Vessels with the oblations carried out and in also for the Great Entrance, and everything went on as impressively and gloriously as in the very best days that I had known in the past.

Watching the Patriarch very carefully and sympathetically as he went to and fro in that long

and somewhat fatiguing Office, so frail and bent, I could not but wonder how long he was likely to live. He was, I believe, only 58, but looked well over 80, and however bright his Faith might be, there must have been times when he felt that the burden of responsibility and anxiety were almost more than he could bear. At length the Service concluded, and fatigued and weary-looking—one could almost feel they heard his sigh of relief that he had completed it—he took his seat and asked me to sit beside him and share his Ceremonial breaking of his fast. This is always done at the close of the Liturgy by partaking of a small section of bread and drinking a little warm wine and water, handed by a server. Bishop Creighton, long years ago now, was asked to share the Ceremonial breaking of his fast by the Emperor after his Coronation. This little ceremony has given some visitors, who have had the honour of sharing it, the impression that they were receiving Communion, but of course it is after the service is over and is in no way connected with the Consecration.

Another little ceremony followed, which *was* connected with the Consecration, though in one sense indirectly, yet in another very closely indeed, and it will probably interest some of my readers to learn of it. A very small loaf was brought to me as had often been done before in other churches, shaped rather like our cottage loaf and with religious characters printed upon it. A small piece, however, had been pinched out of the upper part, as could

be plainly seen. This little portion had been consecrated with the other bread and wine, and when the celebrant pleaded the Great Sacrifice before God he also pleaded my "Intention," with that small part of the consecrated Species representing it, that God would grant me "my heart's desire, and fulfil all my mind, thus bringing me, though not receiving Communion, into the very heart of the service, the loaf being given to me at the end to remind me of it. Need I say it is one of my most cherished possessions ? Then the members of the council of the church were presented to me and expressed their warmest welcome, and saying they regarded me as representing British sympathy and interest. I explained to them how glad I was to be there myself, and what a privilege I felt it to share in their service.

Then the Patriarch embraced all who had taken part in the service, and they were many in number, down to the humblest little server of about eleven, and I followed his example, omitting none of them. Finally, having put off his Eucharistic vestments, he clothed himself as the Patriarch, wearing the beautiful blue and white robe, and the white veil surmounted by the diamond cross, as shown in my frontispiece, regalia—I can hardly call them by any other name—which had been carefully concealed and treasured since Peter the Great had suppressed the Patriarchate, and which were found to exactly fit the present occupant of the Office. He then passed through the left gate to hold out the Cross for mem-

bers of the congregation to draw near and kiss, and thus have a little personal touch with him, while I left and went down the other side.

As soon as I appeared, a tumult of cries of appreciation, and even cheers, came from the whole congregation: "God bless England. God preserve and guide its Church. God bless the English people, our only friends in this time of trouble. God bless you for coming from them to give us this message of cheer and sympathy," came from every part of the church, old and young pressing forward to kiss my hands, and cross themselves—with them their way of receiving a bishop's blessing. The greatest enthusiasm and fullest expression of long, pent-up feelings prevailed! It was all so very different from what we should ever see in an English church, but it was typically Russian, and as natural as anything could possibly be. The Russian, when a Service is over, sees no reason at all why he should not be perfectly natural in God's House, and express his feelings of the moment, and do the obvious thing. They cannot imagine that this is in any way disrespectful, or unacceptable to the Great Eternal in Whose Presence they feel they are, as fully as in the Service which has just been completed. Accompanied by my friends, I left the church, and was confronted by the street filled with a great and expectant crowd, who again received me with cheers, and the same loud expressions of grateful sympathy, as I had had in the church behind me, and very slowly indeed, as the people pressed for a

blessing, could we regain our car, and gradually make our way through the crowds and back again to the Mission. Such a scene could only be witnessed in Russia, and could never be forgotten by one who had shared in it.

I could not but feel amused when the Vice-Consul at luncheon that day reported that he had been waiting outside to see what the crowd would do, as he had expected a great demonstration, and he told us how two men had stopped beside him, evidently of the Jewish race, one saying to the other, "I wonder what is going on here? I suppose it is a funeral, but it must be of someone important to gather such a crowd together." Whereupon an enthusiastic Russian exclaimed, "This is no funeral, far from it! There is an English bishop in there who has come from London, and he is blessing the people. He will soon be out here, and will bless us also. You will see, and share in it! The Vice-Consul said they sped away like deer lest this fate should overtake them!"

Next day, a little deputation came from the church, consisting entirely of women, as I fancy men were afraid to come, bringing me a message of grateful appreciation of my visit, and which one of them duly read and presented to me. They brought me also four ikons. One was from the Patriarch himself, a very modern one, and of no great intrinsic value. He very touchingly said in his message—"I am too poor to send you anything of value, or



indeed anything of my own, as I possess nothing, but I am sending you this which was given to me by the Abbess of a convent near here just before she and her nuns were expelled from it, and deprived of their home and everything they had." My readers can imagine of what great and historic value this memento will be. It is of an angel, and, as he said, very modern, but on the back of it is, in sunk letters, the statement that the Abbess gives it to the Patriarch in grateful appreciation of his help to her and her sisters, and underneath, in ink, written by himself, my own name and "Given by Patriarch Tikhon." The second ikon was also a modern one, but very beautiful, and of Our Lord Himself with the open Scriptures. There were also two others, one of the 14th and the other of the 15th century, of St. Nicholas in the one case, and Our Lord in the other. These I have had carefully cleaned, and intrinsically I should say they are priceless, as I doubt if such ikons can be found again when these difficult times are over. I cannot consider any one of these to be quite my own personally, and said so at the time, and shall take care that they go to my successor in office after my time and be a link between North and Central Europe and the Church of Russia in the better days I hope, and believe, are still to come.

Before I left Moscow I went again to the Donskoi Monastery to say good-bye to the Patriarch, but was received by the two bishops with very sad countenances. They told me that he had been in bed

some three or four days and had not yet recovered from his exertions in taking the Liturgy, and was not allowed to see anyone. I gave them messages for him, and embraced them and told them again how thankful I felt at being able to represent to them in some small measure the deep, prayerful and hopeful sympathy of our country and our Church.

I have many things to remember, as long as I live, in connection with my fifteen years in North and Central Europe, but in the very first place, and with very few others, will always be my personal, admiring and respectful knowledge of the Patriarch, and as I turned away that day with real foreboding, I yet looked forward with deep conviction to the time when all Russia will feel that—"Being dead he is still speaking" to them, and calling them again to those old spiritual ideals which he so faithfully set before them in their days of travail and trial. He will, I feel certain, be an even greater influence in the time to come, and will probably be known as "Saint Tikhon the Patriarch," to distinguish him from the other Saint Tikhon who preceded him, and who is also gratefully remembered and venerated, and after whom he was given his name.

Many of my readers may not know exactly what an ikon is. It is a sacred picture used for devotional purposes, and has been in use from the earliest days of Russian Christianity. They have their own traditions carefully kept, and amongst them is the idea of keeping out of Divine worship anything of the nature

of a "graven image," in strict obedience, as they consider, to the Second Commandment. In the earlier days there was no difficulty whatever in observing this; the religious picture painted upon wood presented no difficulties, and was a very great addition and incentive to devotion, especially the devotions of a people unable to read. It has been said, and truly I believe, that the ikon is the illiterate peasant's New Testament, for there he has described for him Our Lord, His Mother, and the Saints and Prophets, and as he looks at them they convey to him spiritual lessons, although of course not so complete as in the written page.

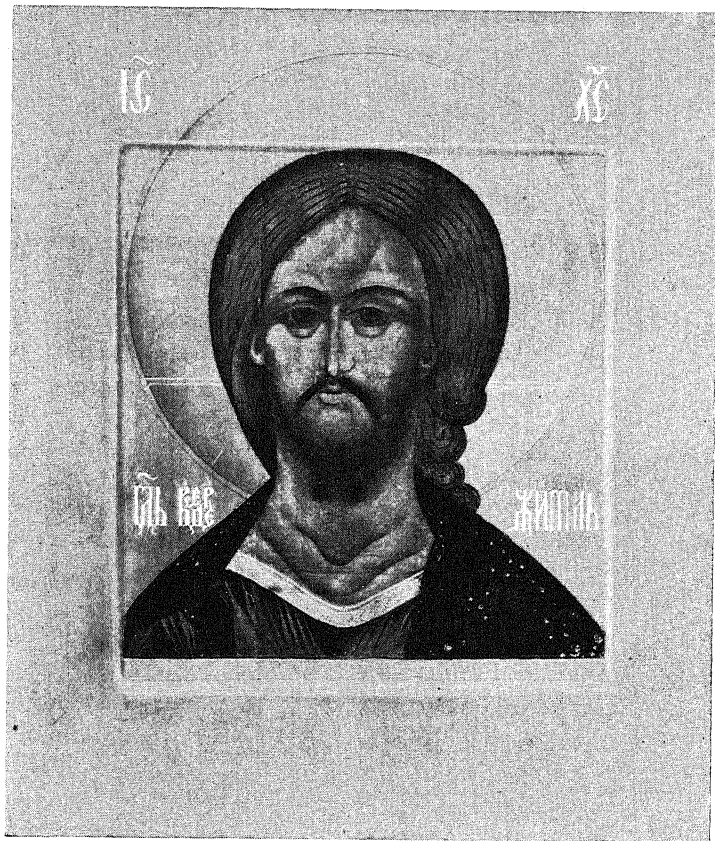
As time went on the ikons became more elaborate in character, from a perfectly natural wish to adorn them and thus express devout appreciation. The dress was made to take the form of gold, silver and jewels, with a frame of the same ornate character, the face and hands just visible beneath, being left quite flat as before. This presents a curious and unique effect quite different from anything to be found in any other country, or in any other form of worship.

The ikon being set apart for devotional purposes, and used entirely to deepen one's religious feelings, and the earnestness of those standing before it, is held to gradually acquire a devotional character of its own. This may seem somewhat strange to those unfamiliar with them, but it is the same idea that is implied by the erection of our churches and all they contain. They are set apart as aids to devo-

tion, and this setting apart, if any spiritual reality is involved in it, surely is meant to make them outward and visible signs of something inward and spiritual, conveyed by their use.

When Jacob lay down to sleep and pillowed his head upon a stone and saw next morning, as he appears to have done, that it was part of an old altar, he is reported to have said that the place itself possessed a spiritual character ("Surely the Lord *is* in this place and I knew it not"), which it had acquired from the prayers of the devout who had worshipped and offered sacrifices there. The Russian idea is the same. The ikon from constant and devotional use acquires a spiritual character and becomes more and more, as time goes on, a real aid to devotion. The more ancient, therefore, the ikon is, the more spiritual value it is held to possess.

It can easily be imagined, therefore, what a perfectly invaluable present the Church was making in giving me these two ikons, one of the 15th and one of the 16th century. Moscow gave Sir George Buchanan in 1916 the freedom of the city, the first time it had been conferred upon anyone not a Russian. At the same time they gave him a beautiful silver bowl, but the gift with which they presented him that night, and which was to them far above either of the others, was a perfectly priceless antique ikon of St. George and the Dragon, and which they gave him because his own name was George. I happen to know also that he valued this gift even more than the others.



A COPY OF THE 16TH CENTURY IKON, ONE OF THREE, GIVEN TO ME BY THE AUTHORITIES OF THE USPENSKY CHURCH IN MOSCOW, AS A SOUVENIR OF MY SHARING THE SERVICES WITH THE PATRIARCH ON THE PREVIOUS DAY

[Face page 38.]



The ikon, therefore, forms a very important part of Russian worship. They are always to be found on the screen which shuts off the altar and all its surroundings from the body of the church. They are also carried in processions. They are in every room of a house, and were in the olden days in a corner of every school. No prayers are said in church or home without a glance at the ikon and a sign of the Cross. Not even the Grace before meals is said without a look at the corner where the ikon hangs, usually with a light burning before it.

I have been very much impressed this year with the ikons, not only upon the screens, but in different parts of the church, both in Riga, Helsingfors and Warsaw, and cannot question in the least their being real aids to devotion, and yet not objects of superstition, as many in this country might be disposed at first thought to consider them.

Let me again narrate an incident which I gave in "Russian Life To-day" in this connection. A St. Petersburg friend of mine told it me. A friend of his was driving out in the country, and every time they passed a representation of Our Lord on the Cross, not in crucifix form as in the Latin custom, but painted flat in the usual way, the driver lifted his hat and made the sign of the Cross. "How is it," his passenger enquired of him, "that such a sensible man as yourself can worship anything of that kind?" "I do not worship it," he said in an aggrieved tone. "You do," was the answer. On arriving at their destination

some painting was going on outside the house, and the driver, turning to the man he had brought, said, "Do you see that piece of wood there?" pointing to a log. "Yes," he said. "Would you accuse me of worshipping it?" "Of course not, you would not be such a fool." "Oh," was the grunted answer. Then he pointed to the paint pot and the brush standing in it. "Would you accuse me of worshipping that paint?" "Of course not, I should not dream of such a thing." "Oh," said the driver, "then you are wrong in accusing me of worshipping the painted wood which we passed on the road again and again. I should never worship anything of the kind. I should only use it to help me to worship God, and it does help me," he said with emphasis. Surely there is a difference, and an important and valuable one to remember between using aids to devotion and putting things in the place of Him to whom such devotions are offered.

I was grieved in visiting Warsaw this year, and again when calling upon the Metropolitan there, to find how things are gradually changing there from year to year and for the worse. The Metropolitan, Dyonisi, whose portrait I give in another place, is a most earnest and diligent Bishop and a great friend of Archbishop Sylvester, of whose murder he first told me. In consequence of the great jealousy, not un-mixed with fear, which exists between Poland and Russia, and Russia and Poland, the Orthodox Church in Poland was compelled to declare itself as a self-



governing Church apart from the Russian Church—no new thing of course, as the Holy Eastern Orthodox Church is really a federation of Daughter Churches together with the Mother Church in Constantinople—but the Polish Government, it is said, under the Roman influence, as the Poles are the most devoted of Catholics, is making it harder and harder for the Orthodox to hold their own and meet the obligations of their worship. This year he told me, with tears streaming from his eyes, of his travails and difficulties, and when I think of Riga and Estonia, I cannot but feel how invaluable the Patriarch Tikhon's martyrdom and leadership must be to them, just as it must be to devout Russians all over the world as they hear of it, and feel in these trying days, "This is his call to us to-day to take up our cross daily and thus feel we are true disciples."

## CHAPTER III

### THE CHURCH AND RELIGION

IN writing the above as the heading of this chapter I do so with a very strong conviction that Religion (that is to say true religion) has not in any way ceased to be a real spiritual force in Russia, nor, though it may seem so on the surface, has the Church in any way lost, but increased, its influence as a true and living part of the great Church of the Redeemer.

I still vividly recall my first experience of the deep spell that Russian worship always seems to throw over those who come within its influence for the first time, and which many of us feel we never lose again while life lasts. It was March, 1911, at the very beginning of my work, when staying with the chaplain at St. Petersburg, as it was in those days, that someone said, "Don't fail to go to St. Isaac's on Saturday night. You cannot go on Sunday, of course, but you ought to attend a Russian service, the music is so good." I had often heard similar expressions—"The music is so good." Or, "You will find the service interesting," or "It's a very beautiful church," and so on, and I went, therefore, expecting of course

to appreciate the service in such entirely different surroundings from any I had ever known before, but I was in no sense prepared for what was to come. I entered the church just as the hymn, "Hail, gladdening light," was being sung.

The Saturday night service, which lasts about three hours, and the "All the night service" in monasteries, is the invariable preparation for Sunday, and such a hymn as that I have mentioned, though for the morning, is, of course, quite in place. I stopped immediately, arrested and spellbound, and I felt I was definitely crossing a frontier in spiritual experience. I had never imagined that such soul-moving and such inspiring music could possibly be heard in this life, and my first thought was, for I was a little late, "I have missed ten minutes of this wonderful service." Never can I forget that night, that fervent, enthusiastic congregation, that large choir of men and boys filling the space in front of the Royal gates, wearing their blue and silver robes and singing like the Cherubim and Seraphim. It was indeed worship, and looking down upon us from what we should call the East window, a light behind it enabling us to see His features, was a beautiful painting of Our Lord, seeming as it were, according to His promise, to be there in our very midst, because we were gathered together in His Name. I have often said it, and I say it again, that in no church, not even in our own, have I been so moved as in Russia to feel that the whole object of worship in realising the Presence of

our Redeemer is being fulfilled in us all, and as completely as man is able to bear it.

There is much still wanting in Russian worship from our point of view. There is so little ethical appeal, and many who attend Russian services are often unconscious that such is in any way the object of worship, but still it is a tremendously stable foundation on which to build an ethical appeal, when you are able to experience in the very fullest degree the appeal of the Spiritual. In that sense I feel Russia never fails you. My last experience of the charm and uplift of Russian worship before the evil days of revolution fell upon the world was in June, 1916, when Russia was longing for closer relations with her British ally and feeling that it could only come through the closer union of the Churches, and when I attended a service in the Coronation Church in Moscow, which was the Tercentenary of St. Hermogen, a great saint and true patriot, and whose patriotism was in all minds just then when Russia, it was felt, was fighting for her very life. There the service, with the Metropolitan Macarius as the Celebrant, followed the lines I have described in the previous chapter, only, of course, with the setting of that most glorious of cathedrals, and with a larger attendance of church dignitaries. It was in some ways even more impressive and, of course, from a mystical point of view, quite perfect.

I may mention one little incident which shows the unconventionality of Russians even of the highest

ecclesiastical rank, and in the very midst of Divine service. I had gone, of course, according to arrangement, wearing my official robes, with staff and mitre, and accompanied by my chaplain, and was led at once to a place specially prepared near the screen. A chair was considerably placed for me, though I never used it, for Russians, of course, always stand throughout a service, however long. The Archbishop was robing in the usual way near the door, while the wonderful choir and congregation were singing Litanies. It was the first time I had seen this ceremonial robing, and I watched it with the closest interest, but my surprise may be a little understood when, as he finished, he held out his hands in my direction. I could hardly believe that he was calling me as he was so soon to join me, but someone near assured me that he was, and I and my chaplain moved forward at once. And then to my utter and rather confused amazement he took me into his arms, and before that great congregation kissed me warmly on both cheeks and then on the lips in accordance with the Russian method. I felt I was blushing to the very roots of my hair, and my chaplain was looking on with some little amusement, but his turn came, for he, too, was seized immediately afterwards and kissed with the same warmth and affection!

I will not dwell upon the service, as I have already done so, but on arrival at the door of the church I found that there was an even larger crowd in the Kremlin precincts than there had been in the church,

and as we had come robed from the parsonage and had driven, some little time had necessarily to be spent while the carriage and horses could be found. Standing in front of me was a very feeble and poor old woman and small boy, poor and barefoot, with head bandaged. Instinctively I put out my hand and laid it on his head, and said, "Poor lad, God bless you," when to my amazement (and this was my first experience of such things) he seized and kissed it, crossed himself with it and handed it to his mother, who did the same. Immediately the crowd began to surge towards us, and on all sides was heard, "There's an English bishop blessing the people, get near him." All were eager to have it. Policemen, working folk of both classes, beggars, officers in uniform, ladies in rich attire, all pressed eagerly forward. I could not but think of the great crowds who pressed upon Our Lord in His Galilean ministry, and felt that I was seeing what He saw every day—a spiritual influence making itself felt amongst a great crowd of people. Often in listening to Lessons when I hear such words, "They pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God," I have the feeling, "Yes, I have seen it," for though I am, of course, not dreaming of such a thing as comparison, yet I know what it is to be in a crowd, deeply moved by a wish to realise the Presence of God.

Slowly, very slowly, were we able to make our way through that great crowd and gain our carriage, and then, with windows let down, I had to go on still



THE CORONATION CHURCH OF THE KREMLIN, SHOWING THE PLACE OUT-  
SIDE WHERE I BLESSED ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN UNABLE TO  
ENTER (*see* page 46)

[*Face* page 46.





blessing the people until we were quite clear of the Kremlin. It was a very wonderful week altogether that in Moscow, so much so that I had to write to the Prefect of the city before I left and say it was my only way of expressing my gratitude for the reception accorded to me by the city of Moscow, but that I was not vain enough to think that it was in any way personal to myself, but intended as an expression of the deep gratitude and great admiration they felt for our English Church, which I very inadequately in some sense represented to them. He replied immediately, and said that I had correctly described just what Moscow hoped might result from my visit.

All these experiences have been in my mind during my recent experiences under the Soviet, of Russian worship, and so I have felt that I would like to bring them before my readers so that they may understand the spirit in which I write this chapter and the sense I still have that all these spiritual values in Russian religious life have not in any way diminished, but have become more appreciated than ever before, for persecution has never been known to diminish the vital forces of Christianity, but, on the other hand, has always and inevitably and invariably increased them. Did not Our Lord promise definitely that the best things in life would be increased for us a hundred-fold "with persecutions"? Russia, I cannot but feel, will be in the years to come the outstanding and inspiring instance of the fulfilment of this promise. Those who have been able to attend Russian services

in such places as Brussels, Paris and London, and even in capitals like Geneva, and watering-places like Biarritz, know how Russian worship has reached a far higher level in these days, when those who attend are feeling not only to be foreigners, but exiles and able all the more to enter into the spirit of Russian hymns and Hebrew Psalms, so many of which were written by exiles like themselves and in "a strange land."

This year (1926) I felt that I had to be very careful about religious services, or interviews with clergy or bishops, as I was particularly anxious not to get anyone into trouble, for spies and informers, I am told, are even more dangerous now than in the past; but I have been very careful indeed to make enquiries and to note all that I could, and this is the substance of what I have found and must believe on the judgment of those I can trust, and both favourable and unfavourable.

It is still illegal to speak of religion—not merely Christianity, but any religion—to those who are under eighteen, and this rule is very rigidly carried out in all the schools, though, oddly enough, I am assured that the teachers are all Christians, as the Communistic Party so far does not furnish enough people fitted to teach. It is obvious, of course, that under these circumstances some religious influence is at work amongst the children, because as we always do what we *are*, we always teach out of what at heart we believe, and therefore when a Christian is teaching, shall we say, Geography, it is of God's earth he is

speaking. In teaching science it is the knowledge of God in a very broad sense. And all unconsciously ethical ideals and aspirations are conveyed in those subtle ways, in which the spirit always works, to the minds of those who are being taught.

Still it is a very definite and antagonistic attitude for the Administration to adopt towards both the staff and pupils when it is distinctly understood that it is illegal, a crime indeed, to speak or teach of religion. And some there are, of course, on the staff of teachers who, though not well qualified, are giving lessons, and who, knowing the wishes of the Government, do not hesitate to attack religion, bringing out, of course, the well-known slogan, again and again, "Religion is the opium of the people." The schools, therefore, notwithstanding the other influences at work are distinctly inimical to religion, and specially to Christianity as the religion of the majority of the people.

Three years ago this did not make me feel particularly anxious as I knew that there were other influences at work in forming the character of the children. I always remember listening to the only Charge given to his clergy by Bishop Creighton, extraordinarily lucid and informing as it was. When he came to the question of secular education, he said that we need not worry much about the character of religious teaching given in schools, because whatever was given to the children by their school teachers could always be set right, and would be, if desired,

in the home. And so three years ago I knew and was well assured that it was so, that teaching was going on behind the closed doors of most Russian homes to supplement or substitute the mischief that godly parents thought was being done in school, and at that most permanent of places for life-long lessons, "a mother's knee," children were being taught their faith and prayers, and their Baptismal responsibility in the Church of God.

But now I am told that this has almost ceased, for young children naturally talk with other children of what is said by father and mother, and one could easily imagine such conversations amongst the little folks as this: "Teacher says there is no God, but father says there is"; and, "We are told in school that we must not pray or go to church, but father and mother hear our prayers and talk to us about God." These things, of course, get spoken about, and in time reach the ears of those in authority in the school, usually conducted as it is by a Soviet, and then the consequences follow, because no one can have official or even municipal employment if known to be religious or to go to church, just as no one can belong to the Communistic Party if not definitely anti-religious. The position, therefore, in the schools at this time is a very anxious one.

Then there is undoubtedly definite persecution, although as far as I know no church has actually been forcibly closed, yet the fact remains that over 1,000 clergy have been torn away from their homes, and

over 100 bishops and archbishops taken away from their dioceses, and no one knows where many of them are, or whether living or dead. The arrests still go on, and though it is officially stated that these arrests are not the results of religious beliefs, or religious or ecclesiastical offices, but in consequence of some counter-revolutionary or reactionary activity, yet one cannot but have one's doubts, knowing the whole attitude of the Administration towards religion, as to how far this is not an excuse rather than a reason.

Obscene and blasphemous pictures and circulars and attacks in the press are still published. I have seen some of these pictures, and one of my fellow travellers going to America was successful in bringing one, in the same train which brought me to Warsaw. Few Christians can know the shock experienced when, for the first time, one sees a blasphemous and obscene picture of Our Lord. We think we can imagine what it is, but when we actually see it before us it rouses an indescribable feeling of indignation and sorrow, and almost a sense of sharing in the sin and crime, in even looking at such a thing.

There is a very widely circulated press at this time in Russia, and attacks upon religion are constant and persistent. The pioneers and young Communists and other societies and organisations promoted by the Government are all definitely trained not to be irreligious only, but anti-religious, as I am told is the case in the Communistic Sunday schools of this country.

All this, of course, has its effects upon the minds of the people.

Then there is the encouragement given to the New Church, so-called, formerly called the Living Church, but of which the Patriarch said that the best name for it was the "Lying Church." It is very difficult to get accurate information about the clergy and bishops who are promoting this movement, and of course I have not been able to see any of them, still less to be present at any of their services, but the general impression is that they are hostile to the Orthodox Church, and anxious to suppress, as it were, the religious instincts of the people in the interest of irreligious Government. Three years ago the Patriarch told me that they were making overtures to him, to see if he would not receive them back into the official Church, but he so thoroughly distrusted them and their aims that he told me he would have to be very cautious about it, and I believe, therefore, that nothing was done. I think, however, that we may consider that they are no friends to either religion or the Russian Church.

My readers may feel as they read all this that the prospect is rather hopeless, but let me remind them at this stage that this state of things only really prevails in the towns of Russia, and that they only contain less than a tenth of Russia's population, and that in the country the churches are just as full, if not fuller, than ever, wherever there are priests to carry on the services and administer the Sacraments.

In the towns also, as most people know, active hostility and deliberate persecution only strengthen the faith and deepen the spiritual life of those who are true disciples and devout members of their Church. I am reminded, as I write, of those people in the "Pilgrim's Progress" who, with buckets of water, are trying to put out a great fire, while to their astonishment the flames only seem to rise higher and higher, notwithstanding all their efforts. But Bunyan describes how, out of sight, is one pouring in oil all the time, the effect of which is to keep the fire not only alight but increasing in its heat.

That is how I regard Russia at this time—great efforts being made, without any doubt, to extinguish the ardour of the truly religious, while, as always happens in persecution, the unction and Grace of God's Holy Spirit is being poured into the life of the Church, and its faith seems to grow ever brighter and burn with a purer flame.

There are also other things which I can recall, and which make me look forward to the future of religion in Russia not unhopefully. The churches are all there still with their constant witness, and a Russian church, with its four cupolas, representing the four Evangelists, and its central one, representing Our Lord rising above and yet supported by those who have given His Gospel to the world, is a striking object lesson of the Christian faith. Moscow itself still stands forth as the most Christian-looking city in the whole world. From one of the heights beyond

the river I looked down upon it last June, with those hundreds of churches and their glittering domes as bright with burnished gold as on the day they were placed there, and those thousands of gold crosses connected by golden chains, rising up into the blue sky and flashing their glory in the sunlight, and compared them with our one solitary cross above St. Paul's. I thought to myself, "What a wonderful sight this is for anyone looking across and considering what may be the prospects of the Christian Faith for Russia?" There they are, those glittering emblems of our Faith, pointing upwards and seeming to say to us, "It is all true," and "as the centuries go on more and more will that Truth convince and convert the world." I know of no place which so claims one's reverent attention for what Christ taught and gave to the world as Moscow seen from across the river on a bright summer day.

The religious pictures also are all there in the art galleries, and some of them very striking and appealing, for the workers as they pass through in their groups, and for the children, as they too go through the different rooms and have the technique of the pictures explained by their lecturers. Then, in addition to the churches, the various little shrines at the corners of streets, and quaint little chapels connected with saints of other days are still there, and if frequented or used at all have never been forcibly closed as far as I know. The chapel most popular of all, just outside the great gate of the



Kremlin, is still always full to overflowing, and it is rather curious to notice that the Government have defeated their own object by putting on a post quite near, as a little antidote to the devotion of pilgrims, "Religion is the opium of the people," for peasants unable to read look upon this as a little addition to the sanctity of their shrine, and bow and cross themselves before it !

You simply cannot get away from religion in Russia, and especially in Moscow. Even at the opera, three years ago, when Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" was being given with an orchestral and scenic magnificence quite equal to that I had just seen in Vienna in Wagner's "Siegfried," I was quite astonished in the second scene, when it was opened out, to notice that there was an ikon of Our Lord in a corner of the room with a red light burning before it.

It was that part of the play where a girl is writing a letter to her lover just before she goes to bed. After writing she calls her nurse, gives the letter to her and then after her departure prepares for the night. To my astonishment, the girl went at once to the corner, knelt down, crossed herself and said her prayers. I could hardly believe my own eyes. There in Soviet Russia, in the capital, with the great Imperial Opera House crowded from floor to ceiling, not a seat vacant in its six galleries, and all the proletariat looking on at that most touching of appeals, a young girl saying her prayers just before going to her rest. I could not but feel that those

people at least were having other thoughts at that moment than "Religion is the opium of the people," and I feel perfectly certain that many would reflect to themselves as they looked on, "We have been neglecting our prayers for some time, but we will say them to-night." It has always surprised me, whenever I think of it, that the censorship allowed such a scene to be given, for it is well known that there are some ways in which the stage makes an even more direct appeal than the pulpit.

This year, in the same opera house, I went to see "Salomé," at the invitation of Mr. Coates, so well known in this country, and who was conducting Strauss's music. He had not been in Moscow for two years, and, Englishman though he is, he received such an ovation as I have never seen given to a conductor before, and was summoned before the curtain at the close. "Salomé," as is well known, is not the leading character in that opera, but John the Baptist, and there he was just as described in Scripture, in all the rugged simplicity of a Hebrew prophet, and tempted, as Wilde makes him, both as to his faith and moral self-control, he went on his way through those wonderful scenes, ascetic, hero and saint, meeting his death with faith unshaken and eye undimmed. "Faithful to God even unto death" was cried out from the stage that night to that vast audience in the Opera House in Moscow, and must have made a tremendous appeal, and been a reminder to very many there of the thousands who have

witnessed to the reality of the Christian Faith by sufferings nobly borne, and death met with faith and courage in their own country. I cannot understand the censorship there !

There are signs, too, which many of us gratefully welcome that the Government is inclined to be more tolerant, for I heard on the day I left Moscow in June last that in the village where many of the British Mission went out for their summer nights, the parish priest had been allowed on the previous Sunday to have what he had been asking for for three or four weeks, a religious Procession out of doors, with Litanies and prayers for the rain so sorely needed. A religious outdoor procession in Russia makes a very strong appeal. The well-known religious pictures, or ikons, are carried, and beautiful banners, lights, the clergy wearing their best vestments, clouds of incense, and that most moving of responses, "Gospodi pomilui," "Lord have mercy" from the people as their priest pauses in his prayers, but, above all, that fervent mystic look upon the faces of all who are sharing in the service, and only to be seen in Russia, make one of the strongest appeals to the devout that I have ever seen.

One has no reason to think that this permission is solitary, but rather hopeful that it means the beginning of an altered policy, for surely the Government must be already finding out, as they think of the growing "Hooliganism," and all those terrible hundreds of thousands of children of the State without

any sense of duty to man or God, who are a growing danger to the whole community, that at least religion makes better subjects, more loyal, more obedient, more dutiful citizens, and from their point of view they must feel at least that religion is of use. As far as we are concerned we can, of course, abide by that one test, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Personally, I have found in all my wandering life that the religious men are the best men. Not those who use religion as a cloak, but really religious men ! It must, of course, be so, for however efficient you may be in working for others, or for yourself, if you are doing good work, your efficiency must inevitably improve and increase as you do it from increasingly higher motives and duty to God.

Not to prolong this chapter unduly let me conclude this part of my experiences by saying that as Russia, as a people, has the greatest capacity in our time for suffering, and in a way is suffering vicariously, all the rest of the world will learn the lesson that the Russian catastrophe has taught them. Even early in the war, and before the Revolution appeared, as I read some of the letters that poured like a flood into the British Embassy in Petrograd, from the grateful soldiers and families who were being so helped in their privations by Sir George and Lady Buchanan, I used to say, as I still say, "They are suffering for us."

I cannot insist too strongly upon the importance of our giving real and sympathetic consideration to the present religious experiences of the Russian people.

Everything that I hear, upon really reliable authority, makes me feel assured that true religion is being increased by the services of the Russian Church, and by the deepened sense of discipleship in its people. They have never had such opportunities as now for finding out what is really vital to the Christian religion. They are being brought face to face with the deep problems of our human life, just as those problems were met, and in many ways solved, in the early days of our religion, and under much the same conditions and circumstances.

Without any question *numbers* have diminished (that was inevitable), but the spirituality of the Orthodox Church in Russia is attaining, I should think, a higher level than it has ever known before. It hadn't a very good start under Vladimir nearly 1,000 years ago, and has not had much opportunity of real spiritual life, uninfluenced by worldly considerations, in the past, but it has now only the spiritual appeal confronting it, and its membership must consist entirely, in these most difficult days, of those who make spiritual response to that spiritual appeal. If we are right in thinking that a Fellowship of Nations is being promoted in the world—for League of Nations surely means Fellowship—then the different nations (I am thinking here only of those professedly Christian) are gradually converging and moving towards some common goal; and if that is so then those higher and spiritual influences which make nationalities, and which persist and remain, are also converging towards

that common goal, which surely cannot be anything small or petty or ignoble, but something very *comprehensive* in Christian and Church Life.

Let us think, therefore, of the place which the Russian Church will take in making its contribution to the whole. What does it possess, we may ask, in its religious life and experience that it will be good for the other Churches to have, and to some extent share ?

First, it will have its own particular *mystical* view of the Christian religion. It is just that personal sense of the Presence of the Lord, with personal experience of Him in daily life ; that personal response to His direct appeal, with personal experience of God in human life, that is the leading feature in Russia's religion. No one knows better than I do some at least of its deficiencies, but few can welcome more than I do the privilege of writing, not of its deficiencies, but of its real spiritual possessions—what the Patriarch called “treasures.” Nothing, surely, in religion is to be compared to the personal experience of the Lord Himself. St. Paul never once hesitates about the absolute necessity of that sense of the indwelling presence of Christ, and neither in worship nor in discipleship does the Russian fail to convey the conviction that he is at least seeking it. “ Seekers ” really describes Russia's disciples. “ Have you heard that something has happened in such a place ; what is it ? ” “ A new teacher has appeared—do you know what he is saying ? ” “ Another healer has come

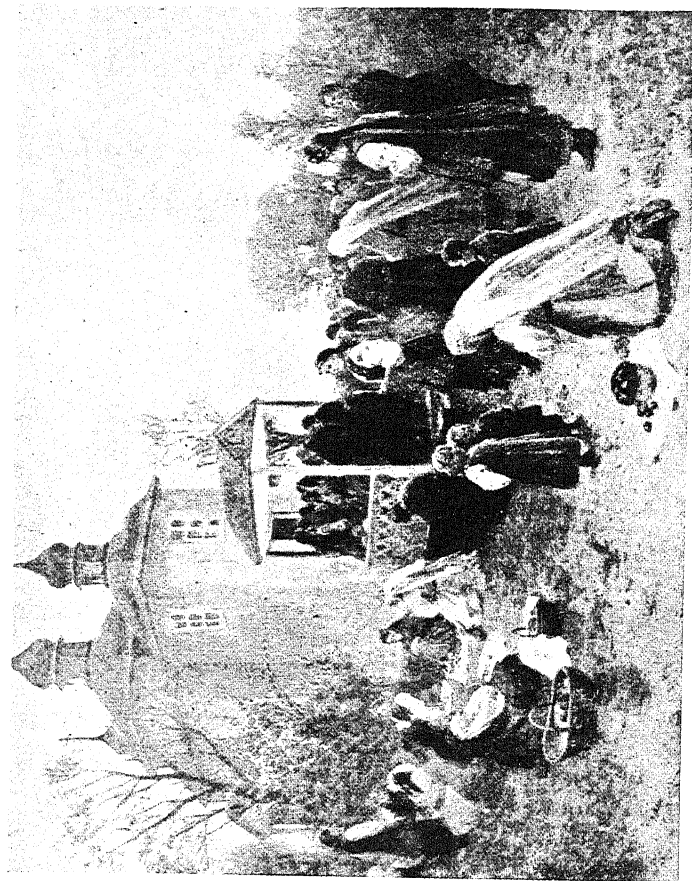
whose touch is wonderful, what would we not give to go and see him." "Have you made the pilgrimage to such a place, and if so, what happened?" These are the questions Russians ask among themselves, and have done for ages. They are "seekers," and we know what our Lord said about the necessity of "seeking the kingdom."

I am not alone by any means in recording this impression, for in one year just before the war three books appeared (all "best sellers" of the year): "The Holy Land," by Mr. Robert Hichens; "The Land that is Desolate," by Sir Frederick Treves, and "With the Russian Pilgrims to Jerusalem," by Stephen Graham, and all three wrote of the Russians visiting the holy places in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood just as I have done. The celebrated novelist, the distinguished surgeon, the accomplished journalist all felt the child-like character of the Russians they met, but as real and determined as anyone could be in wishing to deepen within themselves the reality of the personal influence in their lives of the Lord Himself. This is how the Russian peasant expresses his religion, as I have said again and again. "How wonderful God is"—to him God and Christ are interchangeable terms—"in His love for me. Think of how He came down to live this life of mine just as I live it. He walked the fields just as I do myself, and He watched the sowing, the planting, the reaping and the gathering in. He lived in a poor home just as I do. He ate the simple bread and fish of the poor as we eat them in our daily family life

How wonderful that God Himself should do all that for me, to lift me out of my sins into union with Himself. How I must love Him in return ! ” “ We love Him because He first loved us ” forms the chief, almost the only, outlook of a Russian disciple. Surely the sense of all this will mean something to the other Churches if we can only have the restoration of Christian unity.

Then there is the *picturesque* and romantic setting of Russian churches and Russian worship. In many places in this book I have described those Russian churches, although I have not attempted at any length to describe the ceremonial, but even in the simplest of village churches it is not only as beautiful as the people can make it, but there is a picturesque character about its vestments, and the whole equipment of the sanctuary and in the strains of its music that is separate and distinct from anything else in Christendom. In a wider and more comprehensive view of what the Christian Church is, this will have a very inspiring attraction to the members of other Churches. I know how Commissioner Railton, of the Salvation Army, for instance, one of its most devoted and earnest workers, felt all this when in Russia. He did not feel at home in our own church, I have been told by an intimate friend of his, as it seemed so cold and its people aloof and reserved, but in a Russian church, standing near some bare-footed peasant, and feeling his devotion, and the charm of the picturesque surroundings, he could let





DEVOUT WORSHIPPERS IN RUSSIA CROWDING THEIR CHURCH AND MAKING A CONGREGATION  
OUTSIDE



himself go in a worship which was full of sincerity. We are not all cast in one mould, nor do I believe that Christians of to-day are feeling that they have the least wish to be so, but, on the other hand, that they are coming more and more to rejoice in diversity, if they can only feel that we are sincere in our different methods, rites, ceremonies and administrations, and are growing in true unity of spirit. I do not see at all why someone worshipping, as amongst the Welsh Hills in some little place that to others would seem a barn, should not also enjoy themselves in full ceremonial from time to time. I remember how Her Majesty the late Queen Victoria in visiting the Riviera used to enjoy driving out to some village *fiesta*, where there were processions and the Madonna carried aloft, with lights and banners and little offerings pinned to her skirts, with accompanying litanies and prayers, and would stay from the beginning to the very end. Yet who more absolutely simple, almost puritanical in her own personal religious life, and the expression of it she would like to give, as in her final Jubilee, in that simple service, not within but outside St. Paul's Cathedral. Yet there was appreciation, with a sense of being attracted towards it, in the picturesque and romantic worship of another people and Church. Russian religion, therefore, in having kept its traditional character so long, and indeed increased its care for its ornate character, and thus preserving such a valuable witness to the past, will have

a great interest and be a real help to our common Christianity.

Then there is also, though I will not dwell upon it here, the help that the other Christian Churches will have in coming into closer union with a Church that has suffered, and that has suffered, as it were, in the face of the whole world. If, as I believe, Russia is suffering in the right spirit, patiently and uncomplainingly, and wishing really to learn what God would teach her in this time of her travail, then without question she is losing much chaff, and preserving pure grain. Within the fire of her suffering much hay, wood and stubble are being burnt up, but the day will declare how much fine gold remains as a foundation for greater spirituality in the time to come.

It does mean much to us at this time throughout the whole of Christendom to keep our hearts, as well as our minds, open to suffering Russia. It is quite possible that hereafter she will feel that she has gained far more than she has lost, and become more fitted to take her place as one of our leading spiritual influences when once more she is delivered and set free to live her own religious life.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ORDINARY EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE PEOPLE

THE life of the people in Russia to-day admits of some simplicity of outlook. The so-called *bourgeoisie*, with its many social grades, has, for the present of course, entirely disappeared, and the population as it presents itself to the visitor and observer has for the first time become practically of one class, though this one class has two very distinctly marked divisions—the Peasantry and the Workers. Any speaker addressing an audience in any of Russia's towns, north or south, or central, at this time invariably begins, "Workers and peasants," and the postage stamp, with its hammer for the workers and sickle for the peasants, follows the same lead and shows how Russia's population is regarded by those in authority.

Another class is slowly emerging to replace the old *bourgeoisie*, consisting of those who are successful in private enterprise, or making money as a result of speculation—so-called "profiteering." It is this class, inevitably, of course, under present circumstances which causes serious concern to the Government and yet, as even they can see, is permanent in its char-

acter, for the day has surely gone by when such a class could be removed by robbery and murder, as it has been called into being practically by those very evil and sanguinary measures meted out to others.

Nearly three years ago I attended a Co-operative Congress in Moscow, being invited there by those responsible for it, as I had been able to render some small service to two of the delegates who were going there from this country. It was held in one of the large theatres, and crowded, as those gatherings were still, by the workers, but anything more dreary than the proceedings I had never experienced. It was the sixth year of the Soviet regime, and the large audience looked fearfully bored, sitting with dull and uninterested faces as one orator succeeded another and beginning with the old familiar "Workers and peasants," worked himself up to a fictitious enthusiasm and delivered himself of a fervid flood of eloquence, as he had evidently done at meeting after meeting already, but with nothing at all definite to report as to the progress of the Co-operative movement. As each speaker appeared we all rose to our feet, while the International was played, but nobody seemed interested. On the other hand everyone was apparently weary of these meetings from which nothing came, and the whole proceedings left on my mind the impression that workers and peasants were passing through anything but a hopeful and stimulating time.

This is my impression as I write of the ordinary

every-day life of the people in Russia. It is as if all real zest and interest, everything that was picturesque and in a sense romantic had disappeared from Russia, with its privileged class. Although the streets and shops and places of amusement are all full and sometimes crowded, Russia presents the appearance of having lost much and gained little, if anything at all, in its place. To the superficial observer, who has to stay in a hotel frequented by foreigners, or by visiting delegates from this country, seeing just what they are allowed to see, and being told what it is expected they would like to hear, I can easily understand that there seems but little change, but directly one is able to get below the surface one finds that *everything* is changed, and changed to those who have known and cared for Russia very distinctly for the worse.

My last two visits, however, have been rather different in the impression that they gave one in the streets of Leningrad and Moscow, those two capitals of Russia. Three years ago, it was November, and the long and trying winter of Russia had already begun, with short and gloomy days, and cold and rain, but the snow had not yet come. No one at that time, as Mrs. Alec Tweedie has said in her very interesting book, had a smile or a cheerful look, or, apparently, a cheerful word. Everything looked grey, and almost hopelessly gloomy. As I have already said, however cheerful anyone might be on arriving in Russia at that time of year, every vestige of cheer-

fulness, I am certain, would soon pass away from their consciousness.

I spent the sixth anniversary of the establishing of the Soviet régime in carefully observing the people and their expressions, as they met together and talked with each other. It was what was announced in the papers, of course, as a very great festival. Everywhere the decorations and flags were red. Processions of children in carts and wagons and little bands of people were all making their way to the great square in front of the Kremlin, where there were to be speeches and bands and other demonstrations, but I could not help being reminded continually of the well-known words: "The holidays of miserable men are sadder than the funeral days of kings." The children cheered occasionally as they were driven past, and waved their hands, but I was told—how far it is true I do not quite know—that they were told when to cheer, and that if they disobeyed, they knew that they would be soundly beaten when they got back. Also I was assured that men in anything like public employ who demonstrated were allowed their day's full pay, but if they did not, they lost three days' pay, and not even by a doctor's certificate could they escape this fine.

The whole impression, however, of that Moscow November and its great public holiday was depressing beyond description. The soldiers, perhaps, redeemed the gloom a little, for they seemed always in good



spirits and extraordinarily patient in dealing with the somewhat unruly and undisciplined crowds, being particularly kind to women and little children, bantering and joking with those they had to press back to keep the way clear—really good fellows they seemed to be, and perhaps the only people in the streets of Moscow that day who felt that they were having enough to eat and drink and put on, and with their wages and position quite assured.

Last June, however, an entirely different impression was given to those passing through the streets of the capitals. It was summer, the sky was blue, and the sunshine bright, and flowers, lilies of the valley, forget-me-nots, lilac, anemonés, roses, and the delightful fruits, strawberries and cherries from the North, apples and oranges from the South, were on sale everywhere. Young men, as with us and on the Continent, were walking cheerfully along with open Schiller collars, and without hats; in shorts, and often flannel shirts, and without coats. Girls and women, in bright and tasteful-looking muslins, quite inexpensive I am sure, for it is wonderful what a girl can do with a needle and thread and a bit of cheap stuff in summer. At that time of year Russia's short summer makes everyone cheerful, especially when they appear in public, but whether summer or winter, the life of the people is just of the kind that I have described, uniform, without variety, and not in any way suggestive that anyone is at all looking forward to the future, being content on the one hand,

or resigned on the other to do the best they can for the present.

The Government itself, I should imagine, must be very conscious of the growing want of interest, and therefore of any ready co-operation with them on the part of the people. All alike must be feeling the sense of disappointed hopes and expectations, outworn illusions, big things tried and all to no purpose, everything, as Lenin was the first to see and acknowledge, that was undertaken with a feeling, "Now we are able to try the greatest social experiment that has ever yet been tried, and if successful what a difference it will make to the whole world," not only unfulfilled, but apparently bringing them all daily nearer to national catastrophe and disaster.

I cannot help contrasting at this moment Russia and Italy, and those two great minds, one of which took all its hopefulness out of his country, while the other has filled every young Italian of either sex with the feeling that big things can be attempted and attained even in this one life of ours. A fine young Russian of about eighteen took me about a good deal in Moscow, and when I asked him what he was doing, told me he was at the University, and studying Law, but, he added, with a sigh, and also a frown, "What chance have I of ever making anything of either my life or profession?" And yet we all know that the congestion of the Law Courts for want of suitable legal officials means that prisoners are months on end waiting

for trial! No one can be hopeful at this time in Russia.

The day after that dreary November day of public rejoicing, I went to the Opera, which was crowded in every part by the workers, one of the very largest audiences which could be got together in any Opera house in Europe. From the rising of the curtain to its fall, the play described Old Imperial Russia, with everything picturesque and romantic about it. Beautiful houses, with everything refined in their furniture and service; peasants with their folk dances, songs and flowers; the wealthy and privileged with workers and peasants, and yet everything as attractive as music and dramatic art could make it. I thought to myself that every single person in that great theatre must be saying or feeling within themselves: "Now that is what we have lost, and though there were not only peasants and workers in those days, but every class, yet there was happiness and interest and enjoyment for all. And what have we got in its place? This grey, drab, dreary life of ours with nothing to redeem it and with nothing to look forward to beyond the present hour."

The streets, seen at first sight, present but little change, and as they are full of people, and were particularly so this year, moving to and fro, busy, and with much to do, and particularly in the Nevski Prospect of Leningrad, things seemed much as they used to do, though there were not the picturesque uniforms, or rich dresses and carriages of the wealthy

and noble. And yet from time to time Moscow or Leningrad offer startling contrasts which must give something like a shock of surprise to all who hear of it. Last year there was held in Leningrad an anniversary of the Academy there, to which delegates had been invited from all parts of the world, their travelling and other expenses found them—I have heard that our delegates declined to receive them—and altogether some 700 people sat down to one of the most magnificent banquets ever given in Russia. Nothing had been seen or imagined, I am told by one who was there, to compare with the course which we call *hors d'œuvres*, and which they call the *zakouska*, and which is taken standing, before going into the banquet itself. It was of the most wonderful and profuse variety, and absolutely extravagant in its character. Great numbers of tables, groaning under their caviare and other delicacies, most artistically arranged, were set out for the guests to partake of as they arrived. Wines of every description and all kinds of rich meats were provided for the banquet which followed, and the guests were something like five hours at the table.

The description reminded me as I listened of “Alexander’s feast,” or the banquets of Lucullus, and has become most widely known, I believe, through the great numbers of servants who were in waiting, but who were, to their great indignation, denied anything but the most meagre share of the good things provided. I am bound to say that this is the only instance that

I have known of the commissars having the luxury with which they are credited and of which they are accused in every country outside Russia, and it might be pleaded for them that it was provided for their guests, but as I believe the guests were rather shocked at the waste and profusion it is rather difficult to understand the motive with which it was all arranged and carried out. If they had been merchants from whom something was expected in the industrial life of Russia one could have understood it perhaps a little better, but as all the guests were of the intellectual and educated class, and most of them had come with some wish to learn something of the prospects for culture and education in Russia, an orgy of that kind would, I should have imagined, have been the last thing they would either have wished for or cared to have.

We will say nothing, of course, but thought is free, of the vast expense undertaken on this occasion and to so little purpose, while we know that if anyone wishes to do business with Russia the first thing they are told is that it can only be done by granting them long credits.

There is a tremendous difference, a quite striking contrast between the worker and the peasant at this time, and between town and country life, and that I shall be able to touch upon a little later, and in another chapter. But here let me ask my readers to remember that Russia is the vastest empire in the world, territorially under one rule, including very

many different nationalities, and that while the reins of Government are securely held in Moscow, it must be apparent that they cannot control official life, or even know what that life and administration really are, in places thousands of miles away from the capital.

It is inevitable that different people will go to different parts of Russia, and come back and give entirely different accounts of the life and administrations they have seen, faithfully and truthfully reporting their experiences. This I know to have been a difficulty with many people in this country. "You hear such different accounts of Russia, that you really don't know what to believe, and are beginning to feel you cannot believe anything!" Experiences may be diametrically opposed to each other, and those who have shared in them when they faithfully and honestly report them are perhaps not unnaturally accused in this country of contradicting each other. It is not so I am sure in many cases. Both are right, and are conscientiously reporting what they have seen and known in a country of contrast and contradiction, and where what is true in one place is not true in another.

What most of us regret now in going to Russia, who knew it in other days, is that the religious "atmosphere" of which we were all so appreciatively conscious, and which prevailed everywhere, is no longer there. The churches are there, but they give one the impression of the outward and external only, with the inward and spiritual restricted and confined,

waiting, as it were, until they can again influence the whole life of the people without.

I have not attempted to go very deeply into things, but rather tried to describe the impression that is conveyed to those of us who now from time to time go to Russia, but at the same time I do know something of the very disquieting things which are exercising so many minds. There is, for instance, the spread of disease, and especially that dread malady of which we do not speak, but which I am told by medical men is one of the most serious of Russia's problems to-day, and is gradually extending its fell and evil consequences even into the country. Medical men, of course, are much fewer in number—so many of them were thoughtlessly murdered, with the members of other professions—and cannot attempt to deal adequately with an evil of this character.

Want of proper nourishment and housing are weakening Russian physique, and malaria has appeared. Then there is, as I have already said, the congestion of the Law Courts for want of officials who are competent to administer the law, many of them also having been murdered, and comparatively few being prepared to take their place. Then there are the schools also, many teachers in the past having shared the fate of the other professions, and comparatively few students are being prepared to take their place. The want of school accommodation and school equipment, with an increasing number of children needing education are a grave difficulty. All these

things must have their influence on the life of the people, and especially during the next few years. I do not hear as yet that the insane rule of paying the manual workers first, and with the highest wages, and then professional people next and the clergy last has been abandoned. It would be obvious, I should think, to any sane Government that those who are so vital and necessary to the workers and peasants as are doctors and lawyers and teachers, and whose training is so costly, and of whom so much is expected, should have adequate remuneration.

The great failure of the Government, however, so far is its complete neglect of anything like the development of "character" in its population. Everything is frankly material, both in the education and in the work and in the amusements of the people. The ethical is entirely left out of sight in connection with all social and public life. When children are taught in school that there is no spiritual foundation on which to base a moral law, no sense of duty to home or parents, or Church, or God, or country, where everything is frankly material, and occupation or work of any kind is to be viewed from the one idea of what you are to get out of it, with no corresponding and higher thought of what you are to put into it, there seems to me to be absent and wanting, everything that is absolutely essential and vital to national progress and improvement.

I was talking with a leading Soviet official and speaking of what I had seen of the prosperity in Russia



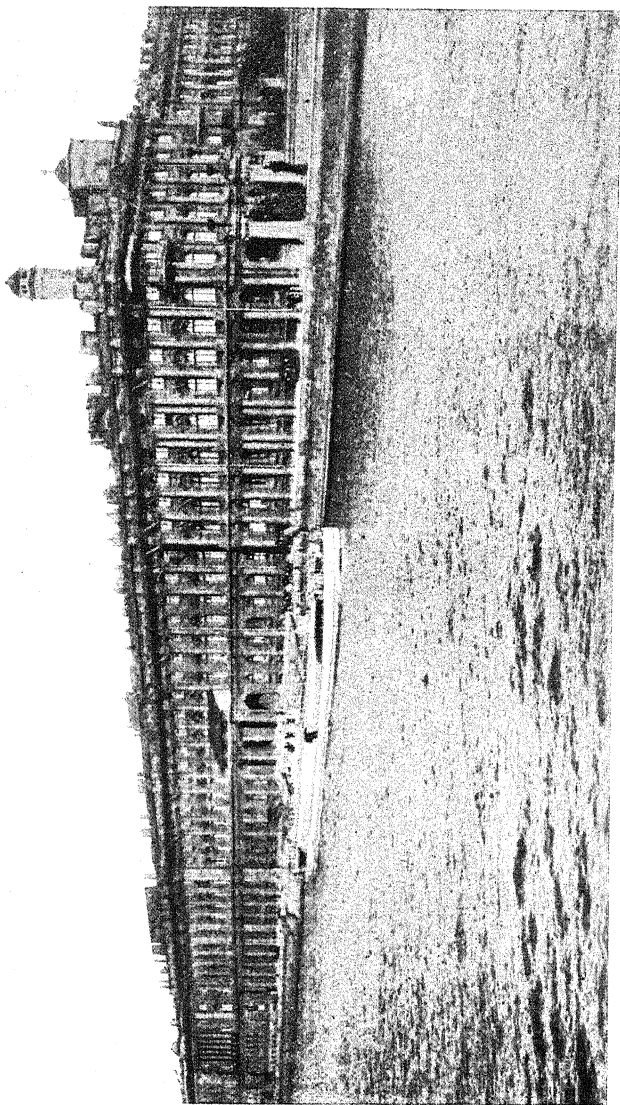
promoted by British enterprise, in the pre-war days, and I described it all at some length. He listened, and then said rather scornfully, "No doubt in those days there were many material values which we do not now possess." To which I replied, "I thought you did not recognise any values except the material." He had the grace to be silent. Hopelessness and the absence of the spiritual distinguish, or rather I should say, characterise the ordinary every-day life of Russia to-day. One can only hope and trust that better days may come and soon.

Beneath the surface, however, in the lives of Russia's workers there must be other influences at work than those without, both as the results of conscious and unconscious thought, and which will have results very possibly that may come as a great surprise to the present Administration, unless, as one cannot but hope, they on their part shape their policy in the direction which the most discerning of them must see that Russian life is steadily moving. The people surely must think now and then of other and, for many, happier days; both at work and play; when busy in daily duties and in recreation, some at least must say to themselves, "Who made it possible for us to be here and doing what we are doing? The means of gaining our livelihood were not produced in our time, nor were these opportunities to enjoy ourselves when not at work provided by this generation, still less by our present Government."

In the galleries and museums, for instance, and

the schools and the universities such thoughts as these must surely suggest themselves. "Who built this beautiful museum, with its garden outside where we sit in the sunshine and walk to and fro and meet our friends. Who brought together these pictures in the galleries, and sculpture and beautiful furniture, not for their own enjoyment, but for the public, for people like ourselves?" The Museum in Petrograd known after his name was built by Alexander the First, who collected together its contents for the public. The Academy, which I have mentioned in another place, was the work of Catherine the Great, and not for her own aggrandisement, but for the public.

The marvellous collection in the Hermitage, unapproached, as far as I can judge, in any other land, was made by that great Empress, and gives pleasure as well as information and instruction to the thousands and thousands who come to see it, including the poorest of the working classes. The University of Moscow, with its thousands of students, was founded by the Empress Elizabeth in 1755, and is the oldest in Russia. One might go on with a long list indeed of the rulers of Russia who not only have not been indifferent to the interests of the workers, but have provided all those amenities which are now within their reach, and just as many must be looking back at times to what the past has given to Russia, from the days of the great Peter onwards, so they must be reflecting, and I should think every day, upon the present and past



THE HERMITAGE IN LENINGRAD, WHERE RUSSIA'S GREAT ART TREASURES ARE SO CAREFULLY KEPT AND GUARDED  
(see page 78)



as well as looking forward to the future, uncertain as it is, and which seems to hold out such slender hopes of improvement.

The unemployed as a class are, alas, distinctly increasing, and in every part of Russia except, of course, amongst the peasantry. I will not attempt to give figures, though they are given weekly to us who keep in touch with Russian affairs, and on reliable authority, for they are sometimes rather misleading, but one of the causes of contention we were told in the *Times* of October 20th between the Government and the Opposition at that time was the demand of the latter that the industrial distress in the towns must be relieved by continual taxation of the peasantry, the Government, wisely and naturally, being opposed to this as likely to both diminish production in the country and promote antagonism between peasant and worker.

Then there is the housing difficulty, for the population steadily increases, and the necessary accommodation does not keep pace with it. In towns—and we are considering in this chapter chiefly the working folk of the towns—both from the official press and from other sources quite as reliable, they can obtain definite information and know what is passing in the minds of the Government. They can know more or less accurately—and what they do know must distinctly affect their attitude—just what the present Government wish to do, what they are doing, and what they are prevented from doing, and it seems to

me that hopes both within Russia and outside amongst those who are interested must now be centred upon those moderate members of the Administration who are determined if they possibly can to bring Russia's every-day life into line with all other civilised countries.

## CHAPTER V

### POLITICAL CONDITIONS AND PROSPECTS

It is rather a custom in this country—and a very great trial to many of us—to say of the various activities of the Soviet Government attributed to Russia: “Russia is doing this or that,” “Russia (as at the beginning of the Revolution) has let us down,” and “Russia is sending out large sums to the miners and seeking to stir up class war,” and so on. It is always “Russia,” while the truth is that Russia is doing none of the things attributed to her at this time, for Russia has had no voice with which to make her wishes known, or any power to act as a country, since the first Revolution was succeeded by the second and the Soviet came into power. We ought always to say “The Soviet Government has done this or that,” or “The Soviet Government is preparing such and such things,” or has entered upon such and such a policy, and is in no way, in the course of all this, representative of the true Russia.

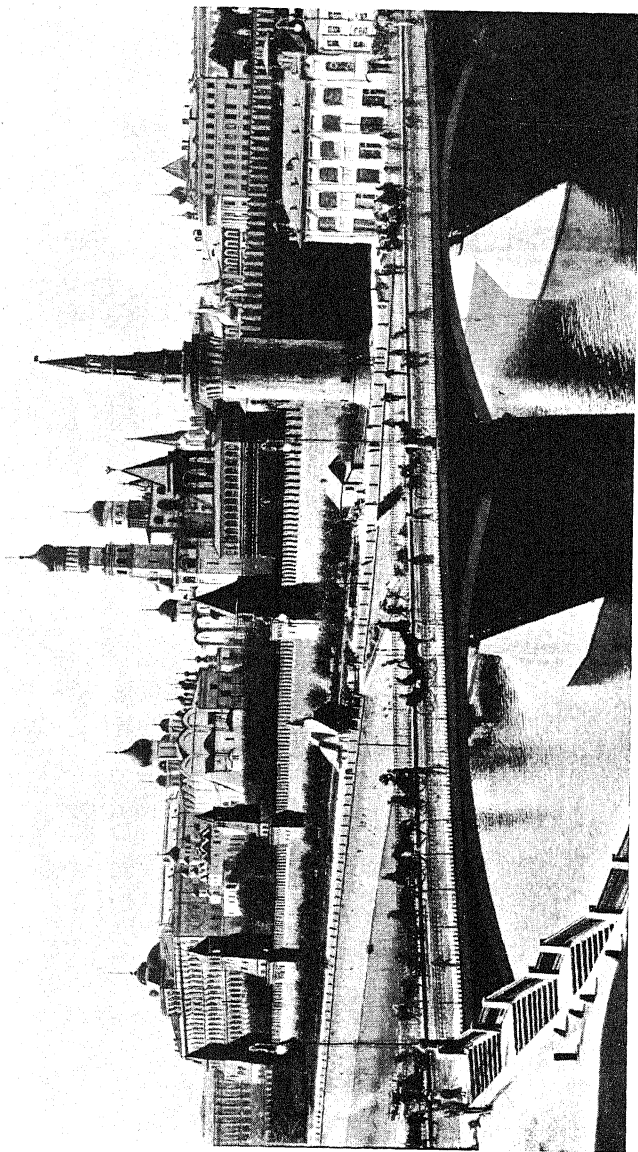
Russia is out of it for the time being, has no voice to make its influence felt, has no power to take its place as a country amongst other countries. Everything

truly Russian is suppressed, and has been since the November of 1917, and will be as long as the present Government remains in office, and continues its present policy and administration. It never claims on its part to be Russian. It does not even speak of itself as the Russian Government, nor does it profess to take a Russian outlook, but asserts itself as the Union of Soviet Republics, with a world outlook, and having as its object World revolution and universal class war. This is the position of the present Administration in Moscow, and it is very important that this should be grasped and as fully understood as possible in considering political conditions and prospects.

The central Administration in Moscow, and which controls official life in the whole of the Empire, is the completion of perhaps one of the most wonderful of all constitutions, and one which has been carefully and minutely planned and thought out by a master mind, the result no doubt of the many many years in which Lenin was an exile, and was always thinking of it as he studied Marx and other writers, as a possibility for himself to carry out.

The elaborate Report published in 1924 by the Trades Union delegation to Russia gives the most detailed description of the Moscow Soviet, and if I were to attempt to summarise it in any really intelligible way it would require the whole of this and the following chapter in which to do it. Let it suffice, therefore, just to say that it is the culmination of a pyramid. At the wide extensive base of this pyramid let us place all the





THE KREMLIN AT MOSCOW

[Face page 82.]



Soviets elected in the different parts of the Empire, and representing its different interests. Above this, and filling a narrower space, let us place those whom these Councils elect as their representatives, and so build up our pyramid, representatives electing in their turn other and fewer representatives until we come to the top, where there are just the three leading administrations for Economics, Police and Education. One would think, at a first glance, that this does really meant something "representative," but nothing could be further from the truth, for in every election the result is determined by show of hands, and one knows what that means in a country where the Tcheka and Secret Police, informers and spies, are simply everywhere.

The ballot is the only way in which free people can vote conscientiously, and as they wish, and this can never, with safety to themselves, be permitted by the members of the Soviet Government. It is an autocracy, far less responsible and far less controlled than the former regime, or than any Government of which one has ever heard. Lenin, who was never anything but frank and straight in his utterances, called it a Dictatorship, and described it as the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and one has sometimes wondered whether there was not something a little cynical in this description, and that what he really meant was the Dictatorship exercised over the Proletariat and not by them, for certainly the Proletariat themselves have nothing whatever to do even in the remotest

degree, it seems to me, with the Administration, and the time is rapidly drawing near when they will find to their surprise that they in their turn, as the *bourgeoisie* and professional classes have before them, are now becoming the perfectly helpless victims of the police and those who control them.

It is a wonderful thing to learn, as I have been doing lately at first hand, how strongly held are the reins of Government in Moscow, and how carefully, though oppressively, control is exercised in every part of Russia's social, municipal, business and educational life. The Government is the extreme of Bureaucracy, and as it comes to be known more fully and its results, so disastrous to the real wealth and prosperity of Russia, come to be realised, it will be a valuable object lesson for the countries of the whole world to think of, and very carefully indeed, as they advocate or promote any changes, however gradual, in their own constitutions.

In Russia the Government controls all foreign trade and makes it a monopoly. No business on anything like a large scale escapes their scrutiny and notice. While permitting, and they will do so increasingly, private enterprise, and wishing as they undoubtedly are to attract foreign capital into the country, they have certain pet industries of their own, and which so far are perhaps the most successful in Russia, though how far they are practically being subsidised no one can know, but only surmise. Some of these are fairly well known to business men in this country,

but perhaps it may be wise for me not to mention them lest the source of my information should be suspected, nor is it for me to speak of two of the leading British enterprises which are being promoted by the Government and which are so far successful. Espionage and informing is specially connected with these places.

I am told, for instance, that at every large manufactory is a small number of alert and watchful young fellows, whose business it is to prevent groups being formed amongst the workmen with the object of expressing any discontent they may be feeling at the time, and also to receive any visitors and accompany them and take care that they shall see what it is wished that they should see, and in other and innumerable ways to exercise minute control of everything that goes on. They are really agents of the Tcheka, if not actual members of it. It will be seen, therefore, how closely business and finance and Government are bound up together in Russia, and what a task is set before those who are determined, if they possibly can, to set Russia free once more, as every other country is, to develop its industry and commerical enterprise for itself. It is becoming ever more and more an axiom in this and other countries to say, the less interference on the part of Government with its commerce and manufacturers the better.

The political struggle which is now going forward between the little group in Leningrad and the larger Administration in Moscow really represents the two

different outlooks being taken as to the office and purpose and duty of a Government. The "wild men" in Leningrad, represented by Trotsky, Zinovieff, Kamineff and Kruspaya (Lenin's widow), represent the old ideas of the early Soviet, of absolute Government control down to the smallest detail, constantly interfering with, and as most people surely know by this time, stifling and choking all the business life of the country. More and more extravagantly are they becoming international in their outlook, which if it became international in its results and consequences would not only mean the destruction of Russia and other European countries, but would make the whole world revert to those prehistoric times when every man's hand was against everyone else, and human life was hardly human at all.

Anyone who read Dr. Edouard Luboff's article on the "Young Reds at work," in the *Daily Mail* of October 1st, 1926, must feel that Russia's workers are fast degenerating into something that can hardly be called human, and are most alarming, as they show us how quickly people can, even in these days, revert to something quite prehistoric and primeval. I am assured by one whose judgment I can trust almost more than anyone else of those who are familiar with the life in Russia to-day in such centres as Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkoff and Odessa, that Dr. Luboff's description is absolutely to be relied upon, and as he put it, "I might have written it myself." So much for a Government which promotes class war and says

to the workers, "Seize what you want, and which others better off than yourselves possess and kill them if they resist," and then has to face the problem presented by those who carry out those instructions literally and as they have been directed, and become, as they must, the most terrifying class with which any Government can possibly have to deal.

The very immediate future, therefore, we who know and care for Russia must feel, is going to supply the acid test as to whether this Government can hold its own and keep in office and develop into something better, by the way in which it deals with those whom even in Russia they now call "Hooligans." The official newspaper, *Isvestya*, in describing for us the affrighting situation, says, "The Red hooligan carries a knife, or a revolver, and walks about cutting throats, stabbing, or shooting. He assaults women (there are many cases where gangs of hooligans have assaulted one woman), he burns down houses, shops, barns and railway carriages, and he even attacks the militia." "Hooligans," says Belobredoff, the Commissar for Internal Affairs, "are chiefly young people. The most serious cases reported as tried in the courts are youths between 18 and 25 years of age, while in some cases they begin as early as 15 years of age."

Thus the hooligan is a product of his age, a real child of the Revolution, brought up on pure, unadulterated Communism, and doing exactly as his Government has taught him to do. Their victims,

on the other hand, are the bourgeoisie of the professional classes, or of the better type of worker who has not distinguished himself by irreligious or wild revolutionary ideas. They are traders, and more prosperous peasants, and business men who are working under the new economic policy.

During the Easter holidays of this year, Dr. Luboff has told us, the hooligan activities in one small district of the central provinces resulted in 170 killed and 182 wounded. In another 754 were captured by the militia, while an equal number escaped. There is hardly a village in European Russia where a Sunday is free from an outburst of hooliganism. One wonders what Lenin would have thought of the present developments when he spoke with such enthusiasm and delight of the "real Bolshevik breed." Now this appalling menace confronts the Soviet Government as no other difficulty has done during their tenure of office.

They have never been lacking in either courage or resource, and I do not think they will be in this case, for they have already begun to talk of introducing capital punishment, and nothing else will stem the evil, but when it does come it will come as an alarming surprise to those who can honestly say, as they do, that they are simply carrying out what the Government has taught and impressed upon them.

I have described all this at some length because Russia's political future must depend upon the way in which the Government deals with this most serious menace. They are quite able to do so, as they are



an all-powerful Administration, with no one outside to question anything that they do, with full power to carry out any policy they adopt so long as they have the Army and Police to rely upon, and I for my part believe that they will deal with it quite effectually, as they are determined at all costs to cling on to office.

Here it may be well to go back a little and consider Russia's place during the present century, for as an old Egyptian proverb says : "The mother of foresight always looks back." Under the Tsars the Government was, of course, as all the world knows, the only real autocracy left in the world. The Tsar was an absolute despot, even, if he chose, in his own family.

I remember a pathetic little story I heard immediately after the Imperial family had been imprisoned, for it was really that, in their home at Tsarkoe Selo. The Tsarevitch, no doubt instructed by his mother, who had taken her husband's abdication very much to heart, hearing that a visitor of high legal standing and knowledge was coming to the palace that day, lay in wait for him, and when he appeared addressed him with "Sir, I want to ask you a question. Had my father any right to abdicate for me ? I know that he had the full right to abdicate for himself, but he abdicated for me as well, and what I wish to know is, 'Had he the right to do so ?'" After a moment's thought, the visitor said, "No, your *father* had no right to abdicate for you his son,

but your *Emperor* had." This was, of course, unanswerable.

And yet autocrat as he was in name—I am not in the least ashamed to say I felt real affection for him, and had much kindness from him—he was by no means autocratic in his administration. No one is so free, it seems to me, as the ruler of a country with a free people and constitutional traditions. For he can really know how the country is being administered and make his influence felt in a legitimate and unfettered way, while the autocrat is of necessity surrounded by comparatively few advisers who can colour and often distort the reports they give him.

Russia, also, under the Tsars was divided into a great number of governments, each having its own administration, and as far as my experience of them goes, especially in Siberia, those administrations were very sound and responsible in promoting good government within their borders, and really watchful in promoting the real interests of their people. In the government of Akmolinsk, for instance, far beyond the Urals, I found, in visiting a great mining enterprise which had necessitated a thousand miles drive over the Steppes to reach, that the provincial Government sent its inspectors to inquire minutely into the way in which the work of the mine went on, as to the life of their workers and families, the provision made for their education and for their worship and for their safety in the mine itself and in the working of it.

A Russian engineer had to be there as well as the British and make his report.

While, therefore, the central Government was in St. Petersburg, all over that vast Empire were other responsible Governments, not only exercising authority and giving direction, but making their reports. I ventured to call the Government at that time in a former book of mine ("Russian Life To-day"—1914) paternal in its character, and I withdraw nothing that I then said. It was autocratic when literally described, but as the Tsar had begun to issue ukases from time to time, dealing with such questions as vodka and other important matters, which he did *on learning that the Empire as a whole desired it*, it was rapidly becoming really democratic in its character and on the way, I firmly believe, to a sound constitutional Government.

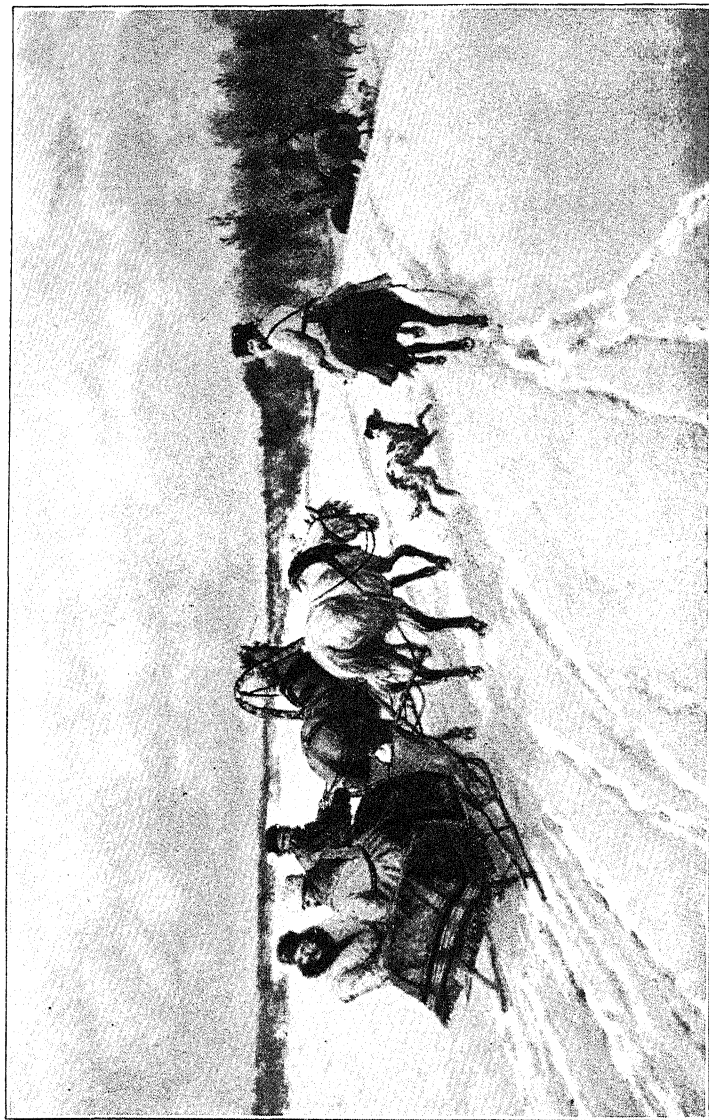
These territorial and administrative divisions (governments is their proper name) still continue. They have been, of course, altered and modified—and not for the better—under present circumstances, but they still remain as governments, and the machine works more or less as it did in former days, rather creakily and needing more lubrication than in the past, but still it works and it holds out the same promise of becoming something that can be called the "United States of Russia." Few people, if any, can think that the old regime can possibly come back, but they can picture the election once more of a Constituent Assembly—it was done in six weeks' time early in 1917—and a president elected, and

Federal Government, as in America, set up, and gradually but surely making its way to efficient and beneficent rule.

This is what I permit myself now and then as a dream, and as a vision of what may come in Russia. The present Administration, coming to the conclusion that they can no longer keep down the aspirations of a people to rule themselves, and giving the permission to elect, suggesting themselves for a term of years as a first Cabinet, and gradually allowing the annual elections to work out their own result! May it come to pass!

The Russian people, both in town and country, have been long accustomed to vote freely, and have prized the privilege and exercised the duty of voting on their own affairs, and it is simply not true to say that they are not fit as yet to govern themselves. There are few countries in my experience where suffrage on important matters to themselves has been so freely and responsibly exercised by the people as in Russia. I have never yet met anyone who wished to see, notwithstanding its many and obvious faults—the present Government forcibly removed, because there seems to be nothing as yet to take its place. Counter-revolution and a White Terror would be frightful things to contemplate, but the gradual process of sound constitutional progress, the very idea of which at one time used to make Lenin infuriated, is not only quite possible, but I for one cannot but think it is the only and sure way out, and had Lenin lived he might have established it.





TRAVELLING IN RUSSIA AS IT HAS BEEN IN THE PAST AND IS STILL, SHOWING THE WAY IN WHICH I DROVE FOR  
1,000 MILES ACROSS THE STEPPES IN 1912

## CHAPTER VI

### TRADE, BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

I AM not venturing upon a description of the economic position in Russia with the feeling that I have any special business or commercial equipment for the purpose, but just as anyone else might do with my opportunities in going to Russia at this time and wishing to use their eyes to see and ears to hear what is going on there. My opportunities, however, have really been rather special, because not only have I stayed invariably at British Missions where the administration throughout the day is largely commercial and economic in its character, but also I have been able to know various Consuls from other countries, Finnish, Danish, and others, and also to meet the business people who come and go daily in the various places where I have stayed, some of whom have even been fellow guests during the whole of the time I have spent there.

I began to acquire a great interest in the development of Russia's vast resources more than fifteen years ago, when I first went to Russia. It was suggested at that time in St. Petersburg that I should

appoint a travelling chaplain for Siberia, as no Church of England service had ever been held there, and there was a good deal of commercial enterprise, and especially mining, going on in different places, and in the different British communities there were those who had never been confirmed, nor baptised, and sometimes not married, officially or ecclesiastically, and much in need consequently of religious services and encouragement. I felt at once that I could not appoint a chaplain for work of which I knew nothing, and therefore decided to go myself, which was, I found, what I had been expected to do, and for two years in succession I conducted a Mining Camp Mission (I can call it by no other name) in some of the most important places in vast Siberia. The places I visited were thousands of miles apart, and, of course, I had to stay in each place as long as I could, which meant not only giving services, but coming into touch with all the members of the staff, the manager, his engineers, clerks, and others, especially, perhaps, the manager.

As we went about, I was told things in a friendly and interested way which possibly might not have come to any business man concerned in the same undertakings. I learnt of the beginnings of the work as well as its present position, of the hopes and fears through which those entering upon it had passed, as well as their prospects of ultimate success. One cannot possibly surely talk of spiritual things, or preach to people, and not take an interest in what



those people are doing in the world ; how they are earning their daily bread and working from day to day. At least I cannot. And therefore I do not hesitate to say that I take a growing interest in the commercial and industrial life of our country and feel more and more that nothing can be called merely secular, but that everything has its spiritual side and spiritual value.

Siberia is the place I always think of now when I think of Russia's undoubtedly great future. There it will be not only that Russia's food and grain for export will be grown most largely, but there it is without any question or doubt that Russia's development of her resources will again be undertaken, and, if I mistake not, largely under British management and encouragement.

I have been very familiar with all that my countrymen have done in the past for the development of Russia. I see now, even as I write, those great factories and mills on the banks of the Neva for woollen and cotton manufacture, the proprietors of which I have known, and still know ; the British foremen and engineers, for whom I held services, and all whose work and manner of life I came fully to know and understand. I see there on the shores of Lake Ladoga, from which the Neva flows, the great print works of Schluselberg, where fabrics were manufactured on a very large scale, chiefly for the Asiatic market, the British staff of which numbered nearly forty, and where the most beautiful and

artistic fabrics were turned out, specimens of which I still have and prize. There I held yearly services even as late as 1916, and came to know and understand all about the work, intricate as it is. I see again that great number of workshops, of factories, or small manufactories all round about Moscow, chiefly Welsh, the British members of which used to come in to my services. I see, as I have so very lately seen, that large Harrod's stores, Miller, Merrilees & Co., it was called, in Moscow, and feel there is no country the commercial development of which so appeals to me and which I feel to know and understand as Russia, and so, uncommercial as my office may seem to many perhaps, I do not hesitate to write this chapter.

I have used again and again the word "development," and shall continue to do so, because it represents what British enterprise has been, and will still be, in Russia. There is a great difference between development and exploitation, the latter representing to my mind getting all you can out of the resources of a country, the other putting in just as much as you get out, or perhaps even more.

In the last conversation I had with the Tsar when he had asked me to come and tell him what I had found in Siberia, I remember saying, "I am a proud man to-day to tell you, sir, that my countrymen are there to develop and not to exploit its resources. They are not there to get out of it all they can, but to put in far more than they take out in the way of improving

the physique of their workpeople, giving them the amenities as well as the necessities of life, of which they have never dreamt before, encouraging their self-respect, developing their manhood and their womanhood, and giving them real leadership." The Tsar looked at me very quietly and with that very encouraging smile of his, said, "Oh, yes, I have known that long and I have shown my sense of it more than once, but I wanted you to come and tell me what you had found and to give me instances and so confirm my impressions."

At present, however, the outlook, as far as British enterprise is concerned, seems to be rather hopeless, unless there is a very great change, and I really see no reason why there should not be, in the policy of the present Administration. I have carefully enquired, and so far I have not been able to hear of a single British enterprise which has been worked to a profit. It has seemed to be *likely* to realise that profit, but there has, I am told, always been at the end some unexpected taxation, or change, and the profits have vanished.

Three years ago in Moscow a very well-known gentleman in this country told me that he had accepted a contract to provide some apartment houses, very much needed. I said, "Don't you think you are rather a bold man to venture upon such an expensive scheme in the present state of things?" He answered, confidently, "No, I don't think so. I have a very definite agreement and a very clearly worded con-

tract." I naturally asked how this scheme had resulted this year, and it so happened that I was driving with a friend in his car at the time, and he said, "Oh, the houses have been built and we are drawing near to them," and accordingly I looked at a most attractive-looking number of apartments in a very good street. "Did the contractor make a good profit, do you happen to know?" "Oh, no, he lost very heavily." "Why, how?" said I. "Oh, there was a flaw in the agreement, it was discovered." That is what I fear will, at any rate for some time, be the case. There will always be a "flaw in the agreement," or unexpected charges, or excessive taxation, unless the policy of the present regime is changed.

The Lena goldfields in Siberia, opened with a great flourish about nine months ago, has often been mentioned to me both in Russia and in this country, and the profits likely to be realised have been dwelt upon. We have not, however, come to the end of the first year, and so I wait and suspend judgment, but already I have been told that the labour and its price promised in Moscow when the agreement was being completed have been repudiated there on the banks of the Lena, where the people of the place say they are not going to work for those wages, and that they do not mind in the least what Moscow has arranged, for they are quite determined to make their own terms.

I give all this just for what it is worth, but it is

what I was told, and we shall see when the first year of the mining company is completed. A large quantity of gold has come to this country by aeroplane, but I believe it was only to have that final stage of refining completed, which could not be done in Moscow, and that it in no way represents the actual profits of the company.

With respect to Russian manufactures, and business generally, the prospect seems to me equally hopeless unless there is some very great change in the methods of the present Administration, and of course there may be this change at any time. That at least is the hope of those, like myself, keenly interested in the future of Russia.

Not only is production diminishing, I am assured, but the means of production are wearing out, without very much hope of their being renewed except by help from without.

This was frankly said the other day in an official address: "There were many factories, well fitted up with their different plants and machinery, which we inherited from the *bourgeoisie*"—I would like my readers to notice that word "inherited," for we should say "stole" from the *bourgeoisie*—"which are now almost entirely worn out. We cannot expect any more of these complete establishments, and there is no possibility of renewing the plants and machinery." The position, therefore, seems rather a serious one when the means of production are thus already so seriously impaired. The peasants, so far, have produced their

grain, and, *so far*, have sold it to the Government and received good money in exchange, better money indeed than they had in pre-war days, but as money is only of value according to what it will purchase, the peasants really are worse off than in pre-Revolution days, as they cannot buy the things they want and need. The long boots that are necessary for their work in the fields; the agricultural implements; the stores and various things that they used to have, are not being produced, and therefore cannot be bought. They must, therefore, hold on to their grain, or to the money paid for it, or cease to produce their grain, and, as they would consider, work for nothing. There are wild spirits in the Government who say the peasants must be forced to produce and supply the grain, but I wonder how long that particularly obstinate and strong-willed peasantry would go on producing grain under those circumstances!

The defect in the present Administration is that so many are in posts of importance connected with economics and commerce who have had no training whatever for such duties. The chairman, for instance, I am told, of the Department for Commerce lately appointed is a man who has never had to do with business in his life, but has just been a wandering agitator until the present régime. Some members of the Government have become gradually conscious of this and the seriousness of the outlook in consequence. Dzherzhinsky, for instance, who has been Chief of the Tcheka, or Secret Police, was also earlier

in the year made head of the Supreme Economic Soviet, and with that ability which he possessed in no small measure soon saw that the system pursued in Economics was the very worst kind of bureaucracy, and delivered himself before the Congress of Soviet Economists only a little time ago in the following strong terms :

“I was shown yesterday by the chairman of the Rubber Trust a piece of paper which was an inquiry from the Saratoff branch of the Trust concerning prices of certain goods. I saw how this small piece of paper, which was sent to the factory producing the goods for a reply, wandered from one official to another until it had passed through thirty-two pairs of hands. The chairman of the Trust told me that when this anomaly was pointed out in his department, it was stated that five pairs of hands would suffice to get the required reply, including the messenger. Even this number I consider too large, but up till now thirty-two people have already dealt with this piece of paper, excluding, of course, the separate questions which were raised by it in two distinct departments. This example demonstrates the whole of our system. . . .”

“But even in our Supreme Economic Soviet things are not better. I am interested, for instance, in retail prices of textile materials. I will show you the means we adopt to lower the prices. I hand the question to a member of the Presidium responsible for this section; he hands it over to the chief of the department, who hands it over to his assistant. The

assistant hands it over to the chief of the subsection, who hands it over to his assistants. You must not overlook the fact that each of these people have their own secretaries, and it is only after all this wandering that the enquiry reaches the actual person who will deal with it. But it is very often seen that this person knows nothing about this particular question, and therefore he writes a minute on the subject. (After all it is the Chief of the Supreme Economic Soviet who wants this prompt information.) So he writes to the Textile Syndicate, to Comrade Kilevitz. Naturally Kilevitz cannot be expected to deal with this and he hands it over to the next man. This will take a day if they are afraid of Dzherzhinsky, but if it is not Dzherzhinsky the enquiry will continue on its journey a week and even a whole month, whereas the best thing would have been to ring up the exact department, get one's answer and make all the minutes unnecessary."

I will not give more of this interesting speech verbatim, but it ended with a very strongly worded reproach of those who came late to business and stayed the shortest possible time.

Shortly after this he died suddenly, and ever since then it has been whispered that he was poisoned, and perhaps, when the whispers become outspoken speech in time to come, exhumation may settle this important matter.

*Izvestiya*, one of the two official newspapers, on September 24 published a very serious statement



concerning the way in which grain was being handled, and drew a distinction between Government and private administrations, pointing out in the plainest possible terms that it was cheaper for Soviet grain to reach Leningrad in ships that had made a tour round the world from the Black Sea and Bosphorus, when sent by private traders, than it was for the Government to bring it by the short railway route direct from Odessa to the North. Could bureaucracy make a more humiliating confession ?

It will be most interesting to follow the struggle now definitely going on between the two capitals headed by Stalin in Moscow and Zinovieff and Trotsky and other hot-heads in Leningrad. Stalin, of course, is a disciple of Lenin, just as he has succeeded to that strong man's place, and firmly convinced that the strong economic policy which his predecessor introduced is the only sane and possible one for Russia. Private enterprise and absence of Government interference, and encouragement of individual ability and foreign co-operation—no country in the world can get on without that—are the only ways in which Russia can possibly be restored. This is the view of Moscow.

Leningrad seems wilder than ever, and if Trotsky is really sincere in what he said in his last book, as Mr. Norman Angell and others have pointed out, he and those who are with him can only mean to wreck the rest of the world in the same way and bring them to the same hopeless state in which Russia will

remain until there is a definite change in administration. One can hardly imagine that men can be so unpractical, not to say insane, but Æsop's fable of the fox which had lost its tail and wished to persuade others they should be tailless also is perhaps truer to human life than some of us have thought until now.

Money is extremely scarce in Russia just now, and we are told again and again that business can only be conducted with foreign contractors by their granting long credits, and yet they have been able to send over nearly a million sterling to our miners in their wild ideas of promoting what they consider to be class war and Red Revolution. The workers of Russia have had to produce this large sum by deductions from their scanty wages, about 24s. a week it is said, though it varies in places, and this to help miners who as soon as they began their work in the Midlands were receiving as much as £12 a week. Pictures were drawn in the speeches delivered to the workers in Russia of our miners solid in their antipathy to their masters, and at that very time they were returning to their work with songs and mouth-organs, while girls and women were cheering the men as they marched along to take up their duties once more. One wonders what the workers of Russia will think when they learn, as surely they must in time, that the long coal strike is over, and the end has been brought about by the miners voluntarily returning to their work again.

A strike in this country is never understood in any other, least of all in Russia. I told a leading Soviet commissary shortly after I arrived in Russia that I had left England just as the general strike was beginning, and of course he pricked up his ears and thought he was going to hear something very interesting and encouraging from his point of view. I took care to tell him how general was the rush to serve their country from every class, and I described also the perfectly friendly feeling between officials, policemen and others and the strikers, and amongst other things described a cricket match which had just been played between policemen and strikers some distance from London. I could see at once that he did not in the least believe a single word that I said. How could he? You could never have such a thing except in this country, nor would any other country support strikers through their families out of the rates while the wealth of the country was being diminished by more than a million a day.

There is rising, however, slowly and surely in Russia an entirely new force, well known to us, and playing such a very important part in our national life, and that is Public opinion, without which no Government or Administration can possibly live in these days—Public opinion which is formed by the conversations of people on their way to work; at their meals; betweenwhiles; as they travel to and fro by train or by bus; as they leave public meetings, or church services, as they chat together socially,

above all as they read their newspapers and discuss what they read together. All this is well known to us, but it is an entirely new force in Russia, where day by day the different workers and peasants alike get more outspoken, where more newspapers, quite apart from the official ones, and monthly reviews and books are printed and published than ever before, and also read very carefully. Even the peasants are now able to make their influence felt in this way, for there is wireless and telephones, and visits by aeroplanes, more or less reliable information circulated in places once far away from the centres of interest. Important meetings and congresses have been postponed this very year because those in authority are learning how different elections are going, and the strong dissent of not only peasants but workers also, being more expressed for the methods of the present Administration, the faults of which they can so plainly see, as they have to bear the results of them in their scanty wages on the one hand, or absence of the things that they feel so necessary to agriculture on the other.

I have written this chapter very carefully, but with very great interest, and should have liked to make it much longer than it is if I had not thought that it might either weary my readers, or make them feel that it was not quite what they had expected from a bishop writing about his experiences. At a luncheon given by one of the leading Consuls while I was in Leningrad, at which I was a guest, I met the three Soviet officials, and had an opportunity of expressing

to the Chief Commissar there connected with Foreign Affairs what we felt in this country about their repudiation of their debts ; their appropriation of our factories and plants, and their refusal so far to make any restitution. We went into these matters at great length, and I ventured to tell him what I thought was the feeling of the City of London about such flagrant neglect of ordinary morality. I told him what I thought Russia owed to my fellow-countrymen, especially for what they had done in the development of Siberia. He listened to it all and made various replies, always finishing up with, "Whatever else they feel, the workers would never wish to go back to the old régime," and then, when our conversation was over, he turned to a fellow-guest and said, "I thought bishops were religious leaders and did not concern themselves with finance and business and matters of statesmanship." Whereupon I asked him what he meant by "religious leadership," and told him I considered that it was vital to religion that one should have correct and fair and straight dealings with our fellow-men.

Religion is an experience that is not merely personal between one's own soul and God. It is that which concerns our relations one to another. Love to God surely carries with it, if we follow Our Lord's teaching, love to our neighbour, the man with whom we have to deal. How is it possible to have relations with others, not only man and man together, but nation and nation together, except by

exchanging services and productions and the results of our enterprise, without, in a word, having business and trade? Quite early in the Bible we have described for us the different callings of different people, the different things they have produced, the different services they render one to another and which can only be made of common use by exchange, or trade, or business. Honest and good business, therefore, and commerce rightly conducted are absolutely vital to the full exercise of the Christian religion. One might venture in this connection to quote from St. John one of the most trenchant things he ever wrote, and alter one word in doing so—"If we are not honest to the man we have seen, we cannot be honest with the God we have not seen."

It may be of interest if I give here one or two American opinions as to the commercial prospects of Russia, published as those of Mr. H. Parker Wills, editor of the "American Journal of Commerce," and President of Banking, Columbia University, who towards the closing part of last year visited Russia and spent some little time there. (The italics are mine.)

"Russian business is to-day in a transition state, passing from a purely socialistic Government-owned régime to a condition in which Government and *private enterprise* are becoming more and more inextricably mingled and intertwined. The tendency is strongly towards a reduction of Government activity in purely industrial fields. Governmental authority, however, is still in full control in all fields,

and is presumably able to continue to assert itself. . . . Sections of the public which were previously hostile to existing Governmental methods have become more or less apathetic, wearied out with the sufferings and hardships that have marked the course of the past few years, and are disposed to wait as quietly and patiently as they can to see what may happen. . . . Russia is now following out a strictly *capitalistic* organisation of society under the designation of 'State Capitalism,' and she is rapidly getting ready to make the transition to a substantial measure of private capitalism. The adoption of a law permitting inheritance during the past spring was no accident, but the outcome of lengthy discussion and the adoption of a policy *diametrically opposed* to Communistic standards. Even the maintenance of a very strict State control over foreign trade is being gradually infringed upon, as the 'concessions' to foreign capitalistic interests become more numerous, since each of these concessions is accompanied by an agreement, as a rule, to permit unlimited export of the products that are made ready for shipment under the terms of the concession in question. So it can be safely maintained that, while Russians still talk Communism, those who are sincere regard Communism as a far-off ideal which may or may not be reverted to in any early future, while the rank and file of Russians regard it as a *discredited system* which has made them uncomfortable and from which they should work away as soon as they can. . . . They

unquestionably need capital from outside. What they inherited from the 'bourgeois' system which preceded them is nearly worn out ; machines are old and inefficient and there are few of them. There must be a complete rehabilitation of Russia's mechanical means of production, and the sooner the better."

I am very thankful indeed and much encouraged in my opinions by having what I have written on these matters so strongly confirmed by so unquestionably good an authority as that of Mr. Parker Wills.

There is to my mind, however, no more concise setting forth both of the past history, the present situation, and future possibilities of political and commercial affairs in Russia than that of the chief leading article in the *Times* of Wednesday, September 15. It is so concise and comprehensive that if any of my readers have not seen it, and want thoroughly to understand Russia just now, I am sure it is worth their while to write and get a copy of that day's issue. I will give two or three very short quotations from the article in question to give some idea of its character, and I have joined them together. It is headed "The Russian Object-Lesson," and begins thus (again the italics are mine):

"It is a struggle between economic necessity and a dogmatic creed, between facts and faith, and it has already swayed backwards and forwards several times. It was sheer necessity that forced Lenin to introduce the New Economic Policy in the spring of 1921, before the drought and famine of that year, and to



admit in the most unequivocal terms the *failure of the previous system*. He frankly attributed the failure to their own mistakes, not to the effects of civil war, as the apologists of Bolshevism did; and that is evident, not only from what he said, but also from the remedy he proposed, which was the reversal of the previous policy and the reintroduction of capitalism in the form of private trading, involving the restoration of the market, or a money exchange, and of banking. . . . He admitted the risk of being beaten by capitalism, but insisted that it had to be run. The result justified his calculations in both respects. The very limited amount of private enterprise permitted by the New Economic Policy at once *put some life* into the dying economic organism, and produced an improvement. A gradual transformation took place, affecting the whole economic field. The peasantry, the State enterprises, and the co-operative societies all betook themselves to the private trader because *he served them all better* than they did each other. By the end of 1923 both agricultural and industrial production had been raised from the low-water mark of 1920, and the private trader had become the central pivot of economic operations. . . . Private enterprise was too successful; it was beating the State and the co-operative societies in the commercial field and driving them out of business by superior efficiency in spite of their privileged position. The rigid Communists were alarmed; they saw their economic system threatened with disintegration,

and not only that, but the political system bound up with it. So in 1924 the policy was swung back again, and a campaign was inaugurated against private enterprise. The extreme Left Wing clamoured for its total suppression; the Right Wing thought that this would be dangerous, because the peasantry had come to depend greatly upon the private traders, to whom they owed all the improvement that had taken place in their position through the sale of their surplus produce and of their home industries and the purchase of other necessities in return. . . . Once more Communism showed itself potent for destruction but *incapable of construction*. The private traders were harassed more or less out of existence by a revival of the old methods of the Tcheka espionage, denunciation, arrest, penalties, confiscation and expulsion, nominally on the ground of speculation and profiteering. So far as they were allowed to carry on at all, they were placed under all sorts of disabilities; but 250,000 shops were closed together. The consequences were disastrous all round. What Kameneff called a '*commercial desert*' had been created, and he thought that this was a greater danger to the socialistic cause than the growth of private capital because of the general hostility aroused, particularly among the peasantry."

It was at this point that Dzherzhinsky intervened and caused the pendulum to swing backwards once again, but my readers can easily understand what effect this must have upon the workman—not to speak of the

peasant—whose scanty pay of some 22s. or 23s. was always in arrears.

The *Times* article thus concludes: "They are called on for greater effort, and they reply that it is impossible because the plant is worn out; and the plant cannot be renewed because all the State concerns are insolvent. It will be interesting to see what comes of the latest move. A great purging of the State departments is evidently going on, but it may be confidently expected that two and two will still make four, which is at the bottom of the failure of Socialism. Meanwhile, the object-lesson furnished to the world by Russia is to be continued. So far those who should most benefit by it have resolutely turned their eyes away and refused to face the facts. They pretend to believe that the great economic experiment is highly successful, or, at least, just going to be. But that attitude cannot be maintained indefinitely; the facts are too strong."

It would be difficult to have the political and commercial position—absolutely and inextricably intertwined as they are—better described in so short a space.

I fear this chapter is becoming unduly long, but I hope my readers will understand that everything which throws a light on Russia's affairs just now, and the outcome of them, really comes under the head of its business, trade and commerce. For instance, what is one to think of the sincerity of the present Administration when they make such great pecuniary

sacrifices to stir up strikes in our own and other countries, and when just as in Italy, a strike would not be allowed under any conditions in Russia, and anyone attempting to promote one would be speedily punished if not shot without trial.

Mr. Cook has been received with the greatest possible warmth and welcome and even enthusiasm, and is spoken of as I write in December as "our dear visitor," and is being fêted and lauded on every side. But this is how the official *Pravda* spoke of him in November : "Mr. Cook has seven Fridays in a week. On Sundays he bursts into flames in the columns of the *Sunday Worker*, demands re-establishment of the conditions that existed in the industry before the lock-out. On Monday he aims at honourable peace. On Tuesday he speaks of a General Election. On Wednesday he plays about with the Coal Commissioners' report, and so the tragedy continues whilst the miners' leaders play into the hands of the Trade Union Congress and the Government."

Trotsky is reported in the middle of this present month (December) as having said in his very latest utterances that it is impossible to carry out their business and commercial aims on socialistic lines—he ignores the fact that the greater part of their business is *not* on socialistic lines—while other nations retain their present modes of business, so that the only thing for them to do just now is to promote world revolution with more and more vigour

and energy than ever. So Russia is to be made more commercially prosperous by promoting commercial disaster in other countries !

Can there be a wilder dream than this, or any more unpracticable view of what is good for a country and its people ? It is impossible in these days for one country to benefit at the expense of others. Trade and business can only be carried on profitably and with some hope of permanence by securing the advantage of both parties. We are so closely " bound up in the bundle of life " together as nations that we shall only really promote our own commercial well-being on the Christian lines of " seeking other nations' good," and not seeking to compass their destruction.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE STRONG AND IMPROVED POSITION OF THE PEASANTRY

THIS is one of the most important chapters that I have to write in the whole of the book, because it has to represent and give my reasons for the hopeful prospects that I seem to see, and deeply desire, for Russia's due and great development. I have to try and give my reasons—I hope in a really convincing way—for the confidence that so many of us feel in the certainty of Russia's future and the absolute indestructibility of Russia's great resources. As the Dean of St. Paul's has said in his last book, "To destroy Russia, you would have to sow the whole of its soil with salt." The tillers of that soil, the peasantry of Russia, are not merely a part of its population, but nine-tenths of its people, and if it can be shown that their position is not only strong, but really improved, it must be evident that no lasting harm has been done to Russia, notwithstanding the terrible times and appalling experiences through which it has passed.

Let me very briefly sketch—I wish it were possible

to do it at greater length—the history of the Russian moujik, or peasant. Originally, centuries ago, he was, as in other countries, living upon the land, cultivating it, with his home thereon, and in a sense owning it. As the Tsars of Russia, however, increased their power and their spheres, not only of activity but of influence, and wished to reward successful generals, or favourites, they did so by large grants of land, and these gradually brought into being a landlord, or landowning class. These not only owned the land, but came gradually to look upon themselves as owning the people upon that land, and thus serfdom in due time was firmly established. The Russian, with that tenacity that has always distinguished him, never forgot, however, the state which had preceded his position and life as a serf, and a common saying throughout that period was “It is true,” as he addressed his landlord and owner, “that we are yours, but the land is ours.”

Then, in the last century, came Alexander’s emancipation of the serfs, and the moujik then became a tenant of the land, paying rent for it to the one who had formerly owned both him and his land, and I should imagine in many cases, as when the slaves were first emancipated in the Southern States, he felt that he had not changed his lot for the better. A vast number, however, of the peasantry were placed in actual possession of their land, and the Commune, or Mir, which is another word for Micros, as it was a little “world” of their own in which they

now lived, with the Head Man and Village Assembly all duly established.

Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, the well-known diplomatist and journalist, whose two volumes on Russia must ever be a classic and authority on Russia's past, went and buried himself in the heart of the country to study the life of the village and its administration, and he draws a very attractive picture of the village life, which obtained practically up to the Revolution. Everything was settled by the Village Assembly, the opening of a new shop, the departure of some of its members to seek work elsewhere and return to the cultivation of the land, which was done by various members of the community, so that all had an opportunity as time went on of having the best land.

It was an enlightened as well as democratic rule in consequence which prevailed over a large part of Russia, and fitted its people, for responsible self-government. Everyone was expected to vote in the elections, and in the arrangements of the Village Assembly, at its annual meeting. Women were expected to vote if widows and cultivating land, or in the event of their husbands being absent from the village. It was recognised that if they were doing a man's work in the world they had a right to make their influence felt in local arrangements, and not only this, but that it would be a loss to the village life not to have their influence thus exercised. Such books as "A Russian Village Priest," published towards the







BLESSING THE PEOPLE'S BREAD ON EASTER DAY

close of the last century, give a perfectly enchanting picture of the life of priest and people, their relations to each other, and in some ways the idyllic state of things then prevailing. And again let me emphasise the fact that this was the characteristic life of Russia, as the great majority of its people were so living and carrying on their work.

When the Revolution came, however, and the peasants who were tenants of landowners expelled and in some cases, I fear, murdered them, came into actual possession of the land, dividing it up amongst themselves, quite naturally and inevitably it followed that the rest of the peasantry should be allowed to possess their land rather than have to cultivate stretches of it in turn, and this has gradually been done by purchase, or in other ways satisfying the requirements of the Mir or Commune.

How far the Village Assembly is still a power in village life I have not been able to learn, as of course a great change, of the character I have described, and in one of the largest Empires, must take time to complete itself, and accurate information, especially from places at some distance from a railway, is not very easy to obtain. It must be perfectly obvious, however, to my readers to see that sooner or later the movement which has been thus begun will reach in due course its true fulfilment and completion, and that the wheel of time will have come truly full circle. The moujik, who was long ago, in a much more primitive state, the owner of his little bit of

land, will in these more modern days and greater possibilities again be the owner of it, and no longer in fear of having it taken from him, or his whole status altered by overlords or autocratic authority.

The Russian peasant is a very shrewd and capable person, knowing exactly what he wants and persistently determined, and mulishly obstinate in being determined to have it. It is a very great mistake indeed to think that because he cannot read or write, or do sums, is "illiterate," as the term goes—he is also and in consequence stupid and ignorant. A smattering of education, which is I fear all that many thousands of workers, and in many countries, receive, may dwarf the intelligence, and limit its capacity. Some of us have known, not in these days I am glad to reflect, but some forty or fifty years ago, domestic servants who could not read or write, or add up correctly, but who were remarkably efficient in their work, with keen powers of observation and very reliable memories.

The Russian peasant is often slow of utterance, and often suspicious of strangers, but those who have really come to know him and compare him with the peasantry of other countries will not by any means be disposed to give him a subordinate place. The stories of Tolstoi and others give wonderful pictures of village life, with its small industries in the long winter months, its remarkable energy in the cultivation of the land during the short summer, its keen interest in anything relating to Commune activities, its delightful and touching

folk songs and dances, and the influence of the priest, and the reality of the worship within the Church, the exterior of which, with its painted domes and gilded crosses and hanging chains, is always the leading feature amongst its habitations. Maurice Baring, though not at such length, has given equally charming pictures of Russian peasant life as he has known it. It must be remembered also that this is not the past only, nor merely the present, but the future of Russia, as the life led for so long by nine-tenths of the people will take a very long time to change, if indeed it is ever changed at all.

Sir Valentine Chirol, in his book on India, has shown us how many millions of the Hindu people are still living the life that India's people have led for very many centuries, and are practically quite untouched by what many of us would consider the upheavals which have resulted from India being brought into touch with the West, and especially with us of this country. Whenever I think, therefore, of Russia's future I cannot but see it as being the sure outcome of the life and well-being, or otherwise, of Russia's peasantry.

If anyone is disposed to doubt the influence of the Russian peasant and say to themselves that after all ignorant people of that kind can have but little influence in a country's development, and that must come inevitably from the influence of the more enlightened people in the towns and cities where the Government is established and from which authority and administration proceed, let me remind them

that the uneducated peasants of Russia have never yet had their opportunity. The whole country received its civilisation later in history, and its Christianity also long after the rest of us, and what there is in the way of genius, ability and capacity in the Russian people is just as much in the Russian peasant, however latent it may be, as in his alert and keen-witted compatriot in the town. All the difference between them lies in the opportunity that has been given of bringing out what is Nature's endowment. Gray's "Elegy" occurs to me as I write and his reflections on those who lie buried in the village churchyard, who would have played a different part in the history of their country had opportunity been given them :

"Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast  
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,  
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,  
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood."

Stalin, the strongest man in Russia to-day, and who may in due time accomplish the recovery of his country and bring it back to its proper place amongst civilised peoples—I feel certain that is what he wishes to do—is a peasant's son, and, for a peasant's son, well educated. If he could accomplish what he evidently means and hopes to do he will fill a greater place in history than even Lenin, for it will be very much harder work to restore and recover and set up again what has been so appallingly destroyed.

Nature has made the Russian peasant an obstinate,

resolute and determined being and the remarkably democratic outlook that he has been given must have tremendously increased his strength of character. A former Emperor, hearing for the first time of the remarkable character and interest of the Village Assembly, carefully enquired into its operations, and fastened at once upon its weak points—election by show of hands—and felt that this might interfere with the full liberty, and freedom of its community life, and so sent out instructions that they should in future vote by ballot, the ballot-box being in due course provided. The peasants, however, laughed at this suggestion, and absolutely declined to change their mode of election. Show of hands they could understand, but they did not want new methods which seemed to them like “games of marbles.”

This is an instance, I could give many, of the sturdiness and independence and sense of responsibility and determination of the Russian peasant. He knows exactly, as I have said before, what he wants and is determined to have it; and this wonderful spirit, distinguishing almost the whole population, the autocrat at its head, becoming gradually conscious of what his people wanted, embodied it in a proclamation, or ukase. All this was preparing the way for really constitutional and enlightened government, and I cannot help saying here once again that I am deeply grieved at its interruption, although not without hope that after this appalling interval it may again proceed along the even tenor of its way.

Whatever we may value in the genius that meets us in Russia's literature and art, in the remarkable adaptability to circumstances shown by Russia's refugees in every capital in Europe to-day, we may be certain is not confined to one class, but is God's endowment of the whole people, characteristic of them, and certain to play a part in their history.

Now let us consider the significance of what the upheaval of the last nine years has meant for Russia's agricultural population. In the early days of Communistic rule, when the currency was destroyed and barter and exchange took its place, the peasant soon found that just as sackfuls of roubles were of no use whatever to him, so he could not get by exchange either what he needed, it was absurd and ridiculous to tell him that after he had provided for his own wants by the produce of his labour he must hand the rest to those who were in need of it.

The Soviet, which was established in every village to begin with, and which consisted often of ne'er-do-wells, idlers and drunkards, would be very glad to have their share of the results of industry, but the peasant who had cultivated his land would look at it in a very different light, and not see why he should work for himself and for others from whom he got no return. Yet he was compelled to submit to this wherever the Red Guards could come, for they seized his surplus produce and carried it off, even his seed corn, and those terrible famines, the full story of which has not yet been, and perhaps never will be



told, resulted. We do know that *millions* perished. This, however, was only in the lands through which the railways passed, and where the Red Guards could come. Away from the railhead, peasants were comparatively safe. Still they needed even there other things than the result of their produce—clothing, boots and saddlery, and agricultural machinery—and the inability to supply all these in so many cases was what made the peasants become thoroughly hostile to the present Government.

Not only have they passed through this experience, but they have had to meet excessive taxation, again exacted only where it was possible to impose it, in kind. This oppression, too, was met and overcome by the peasant's characteristic obstinacy and determination, for they began to quietly kill the tax collector. All that was known outside was that the tax collector proceeded to a certain village and never returned. I remember reading in pre-war days of an incident which makes me able to realise what took place on many of these occasions. I mentioned it in that former book of mine which is now out of print, and from which I can, therefore, venture to recall an incident now and then. An infidel lecturer was making the round of some country districts, and in one case, after an attack on Faith and Prayer and Worship and Church and God, he suddenly exclaimed, "There is no God I tell you. If there is let Him strike me dead now, and you will see for yourselves." The amazed peasants held their breath, looking on,

fully expecting that something would take place. "There," he exclaimed triumphantly, "I am not struck dead. There is no God I tell you or He would have killed me." "No," said the peasants, "He hasn't killed you because He expects us to do it for Him," and they closed round him, and there was an end.

It can easily be seen, or else I must have signally failed in my description, that there has been gradually in these last nine years brought into existence a very different agricultural class in Russia from former and pre-war days. A vast number of small proprietors owning their land, and of small capitalists in their way, has been formed, and not only are they not Communistic, but very decidedly and bitterly anti-Communistic.

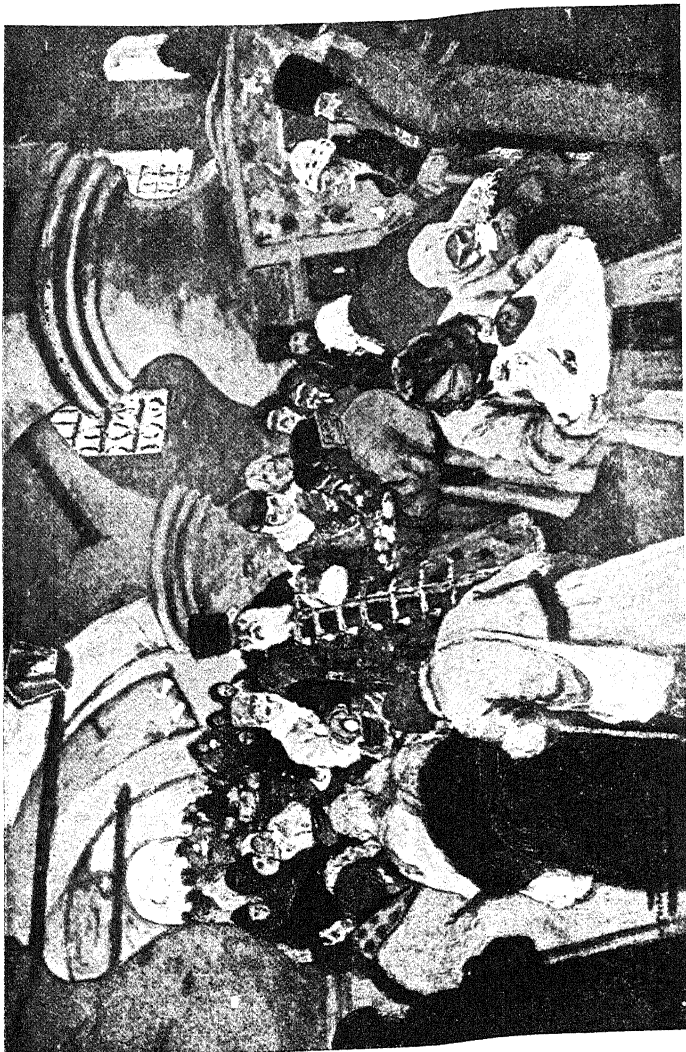
The significance of all this seems to have largely escaped attention in this country. It is quite amazing to me to be asked again and again in the most unexpected places and by most unexpected people, "When is this Communistic rule likely to come to an end in Russia?" A very high dignitary of the Church with whom I was travelling quite lately said to me in discussing the mining struggle, "As long as Communism rules in Russia the workers of this country will point to it and say, 'But Communism rules in Russia and has done all these years, and we hear that it is far far better than our newspapers say.' As long as they are able," he said, "to say that, there cannot be anything else but grave indus-

trial unrest in this country." Whereupon I said, "But, my dear sir, surely you know that Communism as an administration died when Lenin introduced his new economic policy? There is no Communism ruling now in the towns and cities of Russia. There are Communists I quite admit, but the rule and policy of the Government is not Communistic, and it has definitely abandoned that as a policy.

"In the country, so far from there being any Communism in the outlook of the majority of Russia's people, they are as anti-Communistic as they can possibly be. For they are capitalists anxious to increase their capital; they are peasant proprietors on a scale such as Russia has never known before; and so far from it being an unsettled country, it bids fair to be one of the most settled countries in the world, with the most stable of all populations, as the vast majority of its people come to feel that they have a stake in the well-being of their country, and cling to all that belongs to home and working life very tenaciously, determined never to part with it." It may be said, and truly said, and should be very emphatically said again and again, "Communism is a spent and dying force in Russia, and the peasant has killed it." He will stand for, and be representative of, private enterprise all the world over as people come to feel that they have at last reliable information about Russia. He will be the means, too, of Russia's rapid recovery, for in an agricultural country very few harvests will set it upon its feet, as was done so

quickly in Serbia, though no country, not even Russia, at one time suffered so terribly during and in consequence of the war.

Let me say as I close that the Russian peasantry not only are and will remain the most stable of its population, for however opinions may differ about the course of the Government and the development of town life, with its manufactures, its trade and commerce and other branches of industrial life, its schools, colleges and universities, its municipal institutions and all the rest of its urban activities, everyone is agreed that the peasants can never by any possibility be dispossessed and deprived of what they have gained. No one could dispossess nine-tenths of the population of any country ! They are, therefore, stable, permanent and sure in their present life. But in addition to this there is the future for which undoubtedly and undeniably the Russian peasant is ready and prepared. He loves his country, he loves his home, his property, his life from day to day. He has ideals, for he loves his Church, his artistic soul is satisfied by the beauty of its worship, he touches higher things continually in his religious life. He looks forward and upwards and cannot do anything else, with his singularly devout and mystical temperament. What can any country in these days want more ? What can Russia possess more, as an assurance that it will take its due place in promoting progress, than an assured position in the present, and valid hopes and expectations, and resolution and determination to



PEASANTS TAKING AWAY THEIR FOOD AFTER IT HAD BEEN BLESSED BY THEIR CLERGY

[Face page 128.]



promote their fulfilment, as it looks towards the future?

There are many and very thoughtful writers just now directing attention to our own countryside, asking us to notice and regret what we have lost there and what may be revived. It is in the country rather than in towns that small ownerships, allotments and personal and proprietary interest in their daily work are to be found, and in the country life of all peoples Communism in all its forms makes the least appeal. The tendency to home ownership, Mr. Baldwin said early in October last, is a most noteworthy feature of post-war housing progress and one of the most hopeful signs of coming national stability, while Lord Grey of Falloden pointed out at the same time how nationalisation, a very near approach to Communism, means less energy and more experience in management than in individual and private enterprise.

It is in the "countryside" of Russia that continuity and steady progress and development in the nation's history, the carrying on of its traditions, and the preserving of its ideals, are to be and will be found.

This nightmare of the past ten years will quickly pass out of mind, incredible as it may seem to some, as it will after all only have touched the city and towns, comparatively few in number, and left untouched, except for the better, the "countryside," with ninety per cent. of Russia's population.

It may be the same with us, some writers are already pointing out, when this industrial era, which began only

in the last century, may have become much modified if it has not actually passed away. Who would dream, for instance, now in taking their walks, which they can do for leagues in all directions on Ashdown Forest, or in the streets of East Grinstead, that its old-world and timbered houses, with their black and white, that it was once a vast industrial area, a kind of Black Country in its way, with the iron industry and its furnaces (the iron railings of St. Paul's Cathedral were made there), and only because there being no coal, the wood of the forest used in its place for fuel having been consumed, did those industrial activities pass away.

Many struggling little villages of ours, Sir Henry Rew has reminded us, were once great towns, and behind some of our villages are 1,500 years of history, and the records and evidences of their village life, both written and in village customs, are still carefully preserved. The Domesday Book written at the end of the eleventh century is really one of the most reliable of our historical works, and yet concerns itself almost entirely with the countryside. When one, therefore, describes Russia's peasantry as having improved and strengthened their position in Russia's life, almost we might say in every direction, we can venture hopefully to look upon them as keeping and handing on the best of Russian traditions.







*Elizabeth*  

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*H 14*

THE EMPRESS'S SISTER-IN-LAW, THE GRAND-DUCHESS ELIZABETH

[Face page 131.]

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONTRAST BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW RUSSIA

THERE could hardly be a greater ! For those who go to Russia now it is their continual consciousness, not in taking a superficial view of things, but in that which lies at the back of their thoughts and which gradually gives them the feeling, of what an astounding change there must have been in the whole character of the life of Russia. In old days it was the land, to so many of us outside, of romance and mystery, of mediæval traditions still lingering and carefully preserved ; of social life and modes of administration of Government long outlived in the rest of Europe, but still potent and prevailing there, influencing men's lives and destinies in a way unknown in any other part of the world. Russia seemed in those days (even 15 or 20 years ago) remote, almost unknown, far away from our Western activities and civilisation. All that we knew or read of Russia, if we had no direct connections with it, was of the sombre and gloomy, closely associated with Siberia, that vast land, as we pictured it, of wolves and snow, and barren wastes, with convicts in the mines or long gangs of prisoners chained together, as Harry de Windt described them in his

wonderful book, "From Peking to Calais," singing as they marched slowly along the saddest of prison songs.

These, at any rate, were my own somewhat confused ideas when I was called back by the Bishop of London from Central America to undertake the care of North and Central Europe, administered, as it has been for nearly 300 years, under commission from the Diocese of London, and going straight across Europe to begin my work in Russia. "Elizabeth and the Exiles of Siberia," a book I read in early life, had coloured my ideas of the land to which I was going, and stories of the dreaded Cossacks and the Knout, the constant espionage exercised by the Dvornik, attached to every large house, watchfully controlling the whole life of Russia by day and by night, had all given me the idea of something entirely different from anything one had known before.

With a quaking spirit I arrived at the frontier, and handing over my passport to an official, who seemed to me not only gigantic in stature, but forbidding of aspect, I really wondered at that time whether it would not be found wanting in some way, and I be detained as a suspicious and doubtful person, or whisked off into some neighbouring prison. These somewhat disquieting impressions, which one laughed away almost immediately, and which are quite unintelligible now, though it is only fifteen years ago, yet undoubtedly tinged a little all one's experiences and what they meant in that first year when every-

thing was entirely different from what one had known before, and with a sense of the illimitable which no country could have given at that time to those coming within its boundaries for the first time, and which perhaps no other country will ever give again. It was, and continued to be to me in those three years before the war, a land of the vast, the romantic and the mysterious.

My arrival at Tsarkoe Selo, for instance, where the Emperor was kind enough to give me my first audience, is an abiding impression of this kind. On coming out of the station to which I had been conveyed in the Imperial train, escorted by the station master, I was received by coachmen and footman, in scarlet and swansdown, my hand kissed by the latter, as he handed me into one of the Imperial carriages, and away we drove through falling snow, and mist, with guarding soldiers along the route, dimly seen as they presented arms, at length being brought up at the door of what seemed a fairy palace, all white and glittering with snow and icicles, in a setting of snow, lights shining brilliantly from every window. It all seemed to me—I can recall it as I write—like some strange dream from which one hardly awoke as one entered the vestibule, where there was a great moving crowd of uniforms and strange costumes, a mingling of East and West, of the barbaric and the highly civilised, and it seemed all quite in keeping when an official with a gold circlet round his brows, from which an ostrich feather depended on the right, came

forward, and conducted me through one beautiful room after another, and past attendants bowing low, straight from the waist, until I came into the presence of the Tsar himself.

No Royal personage in the world at that time, except perhaps in Tibet, was approached in quite the same way. All this helped me I think to answer the Emperor's first question, after he had most kindly and courteously received me in the friendliest way—"What has most impressed you in coming to my country?" to answer immediately, though I had never thought of it before, "Russia's great spaces stretching away apparently into the unknown." He was thoughtful for a moment or two, and then replied, "Yes, how strange it must seem to you, for I know your own country, to have come those long journeys, as you have done at this time of year, and to see our empty spaces stretching away from you on every side." I said, "Yes, it is not only the vast spaces over which I have looked from the carriage windows, but what they suggest of the illimitable and almost of infinite, far beyond what one actually sees."

My readers, perhaps, will have patience with me as I just dwell upon these impressions, and not say, "But these are not recent experiences," for I really wish to bring out in this chapter the extraordinary, and in a way, startling and absolutely unexpected contrast afforded by the Russia of to-day and that of much less than fifteen years ago, for I doubt if

history offers any approach even to a parallel with it. There was Moscow and the Kremlin, so suggestive of the barbaric and of the past, not in the least difficult to fit in with all the stories one had read, such as that of Ivan the Terrible and his murdered son, and the architect whose eyes he put out lest he should ever plan anything again to compare with that glorious cathedral just outside the walls.

I remember when I first came to know Bishop Creighton, and the conversation drifted, as it so often did with him, out to Russia, and his experiences there, he said in quite a tone of awe: "And the Kremlin, that wonderful Kremlin." "I can only hope that some day you may see that, for it is unlike anything else in the whole world." In the following year, also, when I entered upon my mining camp mission in Siberia, and launched out one afternoon from the "Railhead" at Petropavlosk, in a tarantass, which is a kind of sledge-cart behind three horses yoked together, with jingling bells, and a wild Khirghiz on the box, flourishing his whip, and yelling like a demon, and was carried off for a 1,000 miles' drive across the Steppes, I said to myself, "Am I dreaming? Is it possible that I could have been walking down Bond Street, in the very midst of modern civilisation, three or four weeks ago, and now might be anything I have ever read of in the most stirring romance—a fugitive from Russian vengeance, a courier with messages for distant tribes, a bandit of the Steppes." And so for four days and four nights in a paradise of flowers and running

streams, and singing birds by day, and under the full moonlight, passing camels and flocks, and herds and caravans with tea or other articles of commerce, being brought from East to West!

Then again everywhere in town and country alike one felt, as many a writer has said since those days, to be in the most religious country in Christendom. Religion met you everywhere. Nothing was done in daily life, for the first time, without prayer and the reading of the Gospel. If a shop was to be opened, or an industry launched, or the river was breaking up after the winter, or a journey was to be undertaken, or whatever came about in daily life, as well as in church, there was always a prayer to be said at an ikon with its light conveniently near. At the Post Office, as you bought your stamps and posted your letters, or as they took their ticket at the railway stations, travellers and others instinctively knelt to ask God's blessing on the undertaking. One knew that there was nothing like this anywhere else in the world. The loyalty at that time expressed everywhere I cannot think was insincere, as the peasants and others spoke of the Little Father, and as at all great gatherings, such as, so late as 1916, the conferring of the freedom of Moscow upon Sir George Buchanan, in one of the most brilliant gatherings at Moscow, with representatives of the Army and Navy and social administrative life of Russia. As they sang the National Anthem, all turned as they invariably did on these occasions to



look fixedly at the Emperor's portrait, which, like religious pictures, was everywhere. I felt a strong patriotic thrill myself, and felt sure that something of the same kind was moving in the hearts of those who were present.

Everything at that time, though romantic and unlike anything else yet seemed to suggest not only the permanent, but the unshakeable. One felt that it was behind the age, and that there must be a great change in these days, even in Russia, though so marvellously organised ; yet one felt at the same time that the change would have to come gradually, and that thus Russia would develop, and that nothing could keep it from doing so, into a really great and prosperous Empire. Personally I believe it would have done so if it had not been for that world catastrophe that no one could at that time have foreseen even if they were thinking, as so many tell us they were, of a Central European war.

Lenin, we are told, used to say as he made his plans and thought out all sorts of possibilities and studied Marx, and the application of his theories to his own country, "But we shall never get our opportunity unless Russia enters on a great war, and Nicholas Romanoff is too astute, with all his faults and weakness, ever to give us such an opportunity." When war, however, came, the entirely unexpected did take place ; then, as it were with the wave of some unseen magician's hand, everything in Russia was absolutely and astonishingly changed.

Now, so far from being remote and unknown, the land of the mysterious and of the romantic, no country has been brought, as it still remains, under such a fierce and illuminating search-light as Russia. All the world talks of Russia, is interested in Russia, feels how much Russia counts for in their future. There is not a miner's family in our own country, for instance, which is not familiar, at least by name, with Russia and the Russians, which does not know something at least of Russian aims and politics, for Russian money has helped them to some extent in meeting their weekly and daily expenses. In both hemispheres, even in China, which is the most aloof of all countries, Russia has to be taken into their calculations and thoughts and plans. In fact we may say that for our modern civilisation in every part of the world, for all who are hoping for progress, Russia is just holding us all up and completely stopping the way. It reminds me of an incident when, at the beginning of the war, the Tsar insisted upon leaving that seclusion to which his Council had doomed him for so long, and when driving about like anyone else one day in Moscow, he had to come absolutely to a standstill as a peasant crossed the road, trundling his barrow loaded with wood, taking no notice whatever of the Imperial car with its flag, held on his way deliberately to the other side. The newspapers on the following day had a headline: "The Emperor held up by a peasant and his load of wood." That is really what is happening now. We are all held up

by Russia, which after all these long centuries of isolation has, under its present government, made its influence felt in every country and for every race. It is an astonishing change! It is an absolutely unprecedented contrast between old and new, and so close together.

The Tercentenary of the Romanoff dynasty was held just before the war. I have, and shall always prize, one of the medals struck on that occasion, showing the Norse Rurik the first sole ruler and Nicholas the last of the Romanoffs. It was kept with extraordinary enthusiasm throughout the Empire but who dreamt for a single moment at that time that we were seeing in those two profiles the first and the last of Russian Tsars, and yet who doubts at this time that the old régime is for ever over and completely gone.

Even so late as June, 1916, the old still lingered on. One evening in that month I had gone to call upon the newly appointed Archbishop in Petrograd, in his lodging at the famous Nevsky Monastery. He received me in the beautiful robes of a Metropolitan, wearing his orders and a white mitre and veil, with a blazing cross of diamonds in its front, and with a number of magnificently costumed officials attending him, and at once took me into a large inner hall. There the eighty members of his Metropolitan choir from Saint Isaac's, with their beautiful blue and silver robes, burst out into song, "Rule, Britannia," in Russian, which stirred me to the very depths of my

heart, for it was far and away the most beautiful rendering, not only that I had ever heard, of that stirring patriotic song of ours, but more beautiful in Russia and with Russian voices than anyone could possibly think it could ever be. At that time no Russian would ever sing "God save the King," because it had a German tune.

One glorious hymn or psalm, or anthem from the service followed another, the boys singing as naturally as the birds in the branches of the trees, the men with their marvellous, organ-like bass, no accompaniment, of course, and again such as one felt one could hear nowhere else. Then we went into an inner room, where were gathered together most of the officials of the University, as well as ecclesiastics, standing deferentially, and listening attentively to what the Archbishop, who had seated me beside himself on a sofa, said to me in the way of appreciation and admiration for our country and its associations. I remember still, as distinctly as I felt it then, how I looked out through the window upon the beautiful garden, and blue sky beyond the monastery buildings, and said to myself, "This is Old Russia as it has been for centuries. The bloom is still upon the grape; all the old charm is here still. I wonder how long it will be so." In a year's time all had completely vanished and entirely gone, and whatever happens everyone must feel that in all such experiences as those, Russia can never be the same again.

It is not necessary I feel sure for me to in any way attempt to strengthen the sense of contrast which I am certain my readers must feel almost as strongly as I do myself as I write the words, for if I have even in an impressionist kind of way just put before their minds' eye the Old Russia, they are able on their part from what they do know of the present state of things in town and country, in the streets and workshops, in the places of amusement and in the Council Chamber and now (this is October) the quarrels which can no longer be concealed between the different Soviet officials, the possibilities not only of serious disputes, banishments and exiles to Siberia, but even of capital punishment, to bring out this startling contrast between the Old and the New.

But the future—just a few words about that—will not, I think, in any way carry on this contrast, but will be entirely different both from Old and New, though preserving, let us hope, something of the best of both. It is just possible that under the surface of things there may be more of the old than we at all suspect, and that this still lingering on, will assert itself in time and be a strong and lasting influence for the future. There are those, Mr. Stafford Talbot, for instance, who writes in the *British Russian Gazette and Trade Outlook*, for 1926, who take a very different view of the state of things in the great workshops like the Putiloff in Leningrad, than that which many of the newspapers and their correspondents are describing at this time. He has a great deal to say of

Russian efficiency in both textiles and the manufacture of machinery and even locomotives. There are conflicting testimonies coming from many who have visited different parts of Russia. What does remain, however, I am absolutely convinced, notwithstanding the two startling contrasts that I have endeavoured to depict, is the amazing genius of the Russian people in peasant and towns-folk alike—for there are many influential people, both in and out of Russia to-day, who have come from the peasant ranks—and which has been shown to us of this generation, in Russian literature and art, especially in Russian music, painting, dancing at the Opera, in the drama, and, especially under Anglo-Saxon leadership, in the great realms of industry. There still remain, untouched by revolutions, undiminished in value, Russia's resources, which exceed those of any other country.

Every possibility of development is within the compass of Russia, and amongst its people are those who are fitted for and will certainly not shrink from the task. And so very possibly there may be yet another contrast for the world to see, and in no very long time, more striking still than that presented between those which I am now calling the Old and the New Russia.

With the greatest possible hesitation I am venturing here to say that public agitation against Russian Communistic propaganda is in the judgment of many Anglo-Russians unnecessary, and very likely to do harm. Communism is daily diminishing in influence

in Russian thought and action. Its condemnation by Lenin, if that condemnation is left to do its own work, must have its effect, as no one else in this generation will have his influence. Public agitation, therefore, in this country, and misrepresented there, in Russia, may only just stir up opposition afresh.

We know how the Russian worker has been misled about the real character of our General strike and the Mining struggle. In the same way he can be misled about meetings in this country represented to him as *anti-Russian* in their character. I will say nothing about the effect of public agitation on our own Communists, beyond this, that one of the greatest observers in this country, and one of the highest and most privileged amongst us, once said to me in a conversation, as we spoke of some very extreme utterances of the day before : " After all, it is only letting off steam, and to prevent it would only be sitting upon the safety valve—and you know what that means."

We must, of all people, feel ourselves deeply and intimately concerned in Russia's political future, for if Russia does advance along the path of liberty and gain true self-government, what Constitution is it likely to adopt and to what country will it look for a lead except our own ? At least we can still present to the world the " Mother of Parliaments," and there is no country certainly at the moment which can give to a Russia, wishing to govern itself, such a real lead in adopting that kind of democracy to which their development has been slowly but surely pointing, as

our own, with its Monarchy, it is true, but with a Royal Family inspired only with the one idea of service to their people, and with their lead in domestic and public life; a Government that can be described, as his own ideal, by our own Sovereign, as his was by President Wilson—"Government of the people, by the people, for the people."

Those who were in the public life of Russia when the war came and were expecting, as one of its results, advance in constitutional Government, followed the course of events in this country with the closest and most discerning attention. Let me give one instance. We were some time in adopting conscription in this country, and relied upon voluntary enlistment for the Kitchener Armies. It was felt at the time that conscription would have stirred up the most determined opposition in this country, and very probably it would. Things with us moved slowly, though surely, in ideas of national service at that time! Our French Ally made no secret of her great dissatisfaction. The opinions of their Press may be gathered up into such sentences as these: "We in this country are fighting for our very life with our backs to the wall. We are putting every ounce of which we are capable into the scale. We keep back and withhold nothing from the service of our country. Why does our British Ally therefore hesitate in doing the same? Can she be serious in her determination to do everything of which she is capable for the general cause, as we are ourselves?"

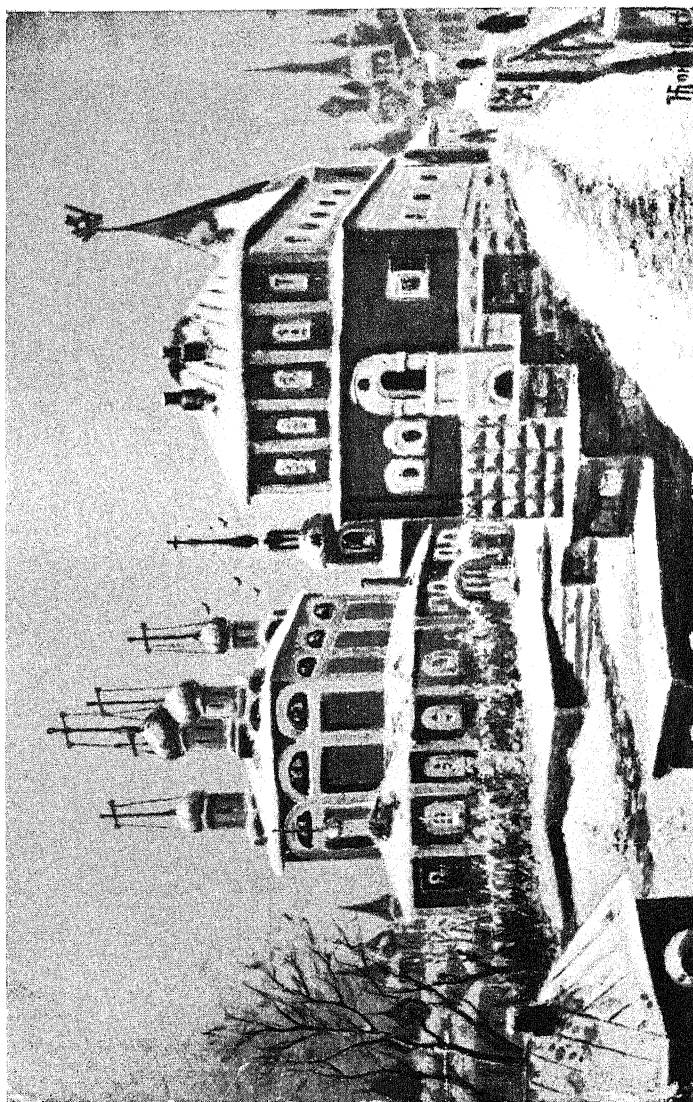


This, however, was, not the feeling of Russia, for I read in the *Nova-Vremya*: "It is most deeply interesting to notice what is passing at this time in the life of our British Ally. It is most appealing to us as we look on and see how the British Government is still seeking to reconcile the traditions of a free people with the inexorable demands of this present conflict. We know how it will and must end, as for all the rest of us, and in the meantime we should like our British Ally to know how fully we understand her position and how deeply we sympathise." I know of few things that were better said at that time by the Press of any country than to describe us as "Seeking to reconcile the traditions of a free people with the inexorable demands of this present conflict." It seems to me that if that was the general Russian outlook, and its publication in the leading Russian newspaper may make us feel that we cannot unreasonably think so, then it suggests at least that Russians and British may proceed along the same lines of political development, understanding one another.

Influences are always steadily at work in the lives of peoples, and which end in giving them the Government for which they are most fitted, and those influences, just as in the formation of human character, are the things which are not seen, and there are many Russians well known to myself—typical no doubt of countless numbers of others—who consider ours as the most stable democracy in the world, with a stability

that is likely to increase rather than diminish. Such thoughts and ideas as these will, I have not a shadow of a doubt, greatly influence Russia's political future, especially if, as we hope, trade relations are resumed, mutual confidence established and British influence again become potent, as in Russia's past.





A PICTURE OF ANCIENT RUSSIA WITH CHURCH AND NOBLE'S HOUSE

[Face page 147.]

## CHAPTER IX

### OUR FELLOW-SUBJECTS IN RUSSIA

OUR present unhappy relations with the Soviet Government and their bitter anti-British propaganda have not only confused the minds of those in this country who knew but little about Russia before, but have given an entirely wrong impression of British relations with Russia in the past, to those who have only in these last few years come to feel any interest in Russian affairs. Our present custom, also, of speaking of "Russia" when the Soviet Government is meant has only added to this confusion and misunderstanding. The truth is that no other nation than our own has taken such an important part *in the past* in promoting the progress and advance of Russia.

Our connection with that huge country began in the reign of Edward VI, when Scottish merchants went out to Archangel, carrying with them a letter of introduction from their Sovereign to Ivan the Terrible, who gave them a good reception and enabled them to begin business as merchants at that well-known port on the White Sea. They were extremely successful in their undertaking, and were the first to

begin those close commercial relations between Great Britain and Russia, which steadily advanced, until the coming of the war. Here, incidentally, I may say that they began that Church work in Russia which, eventually, brought the Bishop of London into the position of superintending and being responsible for the whole Church work of North and Central Europe. I myself have had the privilege of administering that work, under commission from London, for fifteen years, and so quite naturally came to give Russia the prominent place in all my thoughts about my work, that it has occupied ever since I entered upon it. Those Scottish merchants as they built their warehouses, built also their churches, one on the shore and the other in the city, of Archangel, and those churches are there to-day.

Beginning at Archangel and extending its influence North and South, and eventually East as well as West, British enterprise and ability and sympathy with the people of the country, played a far more important part than those of any other nationality, in promoting the commercial and economic progress of Russia. Moscow and St. Petersburg in the north, and eventually Odessa and other Black Sea ports became the chief centres of this influence; specially, however, would I select Moscow and St. Petersburg, the former being as at Archangel largely Scottish in its character, St. Petersburg more English, so much so indeed that the whole quay-side of the Neva, on which the Winter Palace and Embassies and other

important buildings stood, was called English Quay. I forgot to notice this year its changed name, for changed I am sure it is, but its former title shows what a very important part in the life of the Russian capital was taken by our merchants and representatives there.

During the war of the Crimea—how differently civilians were treated in the Great War!—the British residents were hardly conscious, as far as inconvenience to themselves was concerned, that there was a war at all. The Emperor Alexander, it is said, used to walk out from the Winter Palace on the Quay in the morning to take the air, and meeting the little English children with their nurses used to pat them on the head and smile and say pleasant things to those in charge.

St. Petersburg was both British and Russian in its character, the large English Club being a most influential centre there. I remember in 1911, not very long after Sir George Buchanan had been made Ambassador, Lady Georgina telling me that for their first Reception they had had to send out 3,000 invitations, as this would be their introduction to the British Colony.

It would be difficult for me to over-emphasise the importance of British influence and British prestige in Russia when I entered upon my work. Very possibly, this may account for the great respect which I noticed on every side this year shown by the people to the British flag, both by officials and by the people them-

selves. It may explain also the bitter animosity and hostility which have been specially meted out to us by the Soviet Government, identifying us, as they most certainly do, with the activity and prosperity and commercial institutions of the old régime. As I have described in another place, all these business and commercial activities were brought summarily to an end by the Soviet Revolution. Everyone was deprived of his property, and that property seized, or, as they termed it, nationalised. Those who could do so, of course, at once escaped, and were only too thankful to get off with their lives, when thousands of the people were being shot or imprisoned to die of starvation every day. Others lingered on with some faint hope on the one hand that perhaps conditions might in due time be altered, or not being able to get away, and not being at all clear as to what they could do on arriving in this country, or where they could go, felt they had better stay on and await events. But as things settled down and in due time British Agents were once more appointed, and the Foreign Office could get to work, these were repatriated at Government expense and helped to make a new start in this country. Some of them, reluctant to return, knowing what the conditions were here as to unemployment, and feeling that all their interests lay in the country in which they had been born and where they had done their work, settled down as near as they could to the Russian frontier, especially in Finland and Riga. Some went to places like Libau, and



even Reval, but most to Finland, where I found them this year, in business, if they had been able to get any opportunity, or in teaching English—as everyone in Finland and in the Baltic countries generally is anxious to learn our language—not having any business which they could turn to account in the Finnish capital.

When I arrived in Leningrad last June (1926) as soon as I had been able to make out my itinerary and form plans as to the best ways in which I could be of use to our small community there, for there are a few who have now drifted back and are taking their chances of being allowed to stay and trade there, the Consul-General, or to give him his present title “Assistant British Agent,” his chief being Sir Robert Hodgson, in Moscow, told me that there were about 140 British subjects scattered about in the former capital and in a most destitute condition, unable to earn anything by reason of infirmity, old age, or sickness, and unlikely to be allowed to earn money even if they could. “There are,” he said, “about thirty or forty who are specially unfortunate and helpless, and I wish you would try and see them, while here, or as many of them as you can, and then make some appeal on their behalf when you are home again. Until now I have had help from the Imperial Relief Commission, but I fear that help cannot be relied upon much longer, and even with it I have had to do my best to get private charity to make it in any way approach their needs!” I found subsequently that

our Government, that is to say the Foreign Office, had been most anxious to continue help to these unfortunates, but the Treasury, with its many calls and heavy financial responsibilities had felt unable to meet their wishes as fully as they would have liked.

Immediately, therefore, after this request I set out and visited these unhappy people in different parts of Leningrad. I cannot in any way attempt to tell their separate stories, as any one of them would require a chapter in itself, but I must own that I have never been so deeply moved by the sight of undeserved suffering and poverty in all my life and experience. It was the lot of the elderly women who most excited my deep compassion. They had been born in Russia, and in some cases their parents before them, and had never left it, but yet all the time had deeply prized and tenaciously preserved their British nationality and language. In pre-war days the latter was not too carefully learnt in early life, for I frequently found that candidates brought to me for Confirmation at the age of about 17 or 18 had learnt their English for the first time just before they came to their chaplain's instruction. These elderly women, however, married and unmarried, were as English in speech, in outlook, and I may further say in their patience and determination to endure their bitter lot uncomplainingly as any other of our countrywomen. Let me give just three or four instances, though I have to be very careful in doing so lest they may be recognised and perhaps punished for having,

as it may be considered, complained to me, though they did not.

In a small room—a room within a room— and up a long staircase in a very poor part of the capital, in what would be called in London, the fifth floor back, I found an old lady, bed-ridden, crippled with rheumatism, and, it seemed to me, paralysed. Her face lit up, for she had been prepared for my visit, at the sight of someone coming from the Old Country, and she told me her story, describing those better days that she had known, how unexpected all her troubles had been to her, how she had been kept alive by friends and relations, who notwithstanding her poverty had done what they could for her, how thankful she felt, how her faith had never failed her—all without any complaint or recrimination, looking first at myself and then affectionately at the Consul-General's almoner who had brought me. She had nothing to depend upon except the scanty dole brought to her every month, but I am quite sure that if that dole were to cease there would never be any complaint from that poor old creature, who would quietly say her "Nunc Dimittis," and pass away.

Just outside the capital, passing through the workmen's quarters to get there, and in the open country, I found a beautiful country house, with garden and fresh flowers, and even fruit trees, and in one small room, which I was not allowed to see, the former owner was now lodged. She came out into a larger room, lent her for the occasion to see me. I had to talk to her

by writing as she was not only very old, but very deaf, and again came the same story of kindly neighbours also lodged in the same place, and deep gratitude for being kept alive by the Consul's grant, as she knew, poor old soul, that she would have died long ago had it not been for this much-needed assistance.

On the other side of the Neva, where merchants used to have their beautiful houses away from the turmoil of the city, I found another old lady, of over 80, but not deaf, as in the last instance, nor bedridden, but evidently having suffered severely in mind. Again it was her own beautiful house in which she was now living in a very small room which she explained it was unfit for me to enter and for which she had to pay rent out of the miserable pittance that could be allowed her. How far she suffered I am not at all able to say because of the mental weakness that had resulted, but she looked heartbroken and most unhappy, and kept repeating—I should fancy that it goes on continually the day through, “I have lost everything I ever had: they have taken it from me and I shall never have it again, and here I am living in this way and in this miserable little room in my own house, which they won't let me have, and I have done nothing to deserve it.” And so on.

There were others, and here I must be most careful, rather younger, but who apparently had suffered more than all the rest, for they had tried to do something to earn a little money and had come into conflict with the authorities. One had made a little

temperance drink and gone down in the hot weather to sell to passers-by, and been almost immediately taken off to prison for selling without a license—a license which would never have been granted had she applied for it, as being of the bourgeoisie. While in prison, another who lived with her, not knowing what had happened, made a few cakes and went down and tried to sell them. She was treated in the same way. One lost her reason and was confined for eight or nine months; another was taken so seriously ill that she had to keep her bed the greater part of a year.

And so they went on, these unfortunate folk, up and down, struggling and keeping on as best they could, buying what appeared to be rags in the poorest markets, washing them industriously and then making them up into wearing apparel. I looked round the little room in which these people were living together and all was scrupulously clean, as they were themselves in person and clothing, their strained looks and eyes ever furtively moving to and fro, showing what they had passed through and what they feared might still be before them, and 7s. 6d. a week for food, fuel, clothing and rent is all they had left to live upon.

Never in all my experience have I so felt undeserved suffering seem to tear at my very heart strings as I did when visiting those poor women. As long as I live, and present conditions continue, I shall keep their particular case in my mind and do my utmost to help them by sending what I can spare myself and what I can get from others.

From those I saw I can understand what the other desperate cases are like and what a duty is laid upon us who know, to do what we can to relieve them. As some of my readers may be aware, as soon as I returned I made an appeal on their behalf, and was very much encouraged by the help given to me so readily and so effectually by the Press. But many enquiries and some criticisms were offered which enable me to try and make their circumstances more clearly known, and explain the solicitude the Consul-General has felt on their behalf. They *cannot* be brought home, as many people naturally wish they could, and cannot see why the Government does not bring them. The Foreign Office would be quite ready to repatriate them. It is a British Consul's business all over the world to try and help stranded and unfortunate people to return home. This is a very important part of their work and is very faithfully done. Girls losing their places unexpectedly, variety artistes stranded in places like Cairo, or Tunis, or even further away, by the failure, through no fault of his own, of their manager ; men and women losing their work through illness, and then having no resources—all such people find sympathy and effective help at British Consulates. Our Consul-General, therefore, in Leningrad would readily promote the repatriation of any British subjects in Russia able and willing to come. These unfortunates, however, I am now describing are too old, too infirm, or seriously ill to bear the journey. Even if they could, as they have

nothing in the world, they would only have to go to the poor-house nearest to their port of landing, and though many people in this country think that would be better than being where they are, yet as they have known no other place we can hardly wonder that they should not think so, and that they feel utterly unable to come.

It must seem a strange thing to many in this country as they hear of their own fellow-countrywomen suffering in this way that the Soviet Government which can manage to send over more than a million sterling to miners and their families in this country, who are practically not suffering at all, compared with so many of their own workers, might do something to help these unfortunate people, but nothing could be farther from their ideas or intentions, for if they do not help their own unhappy and impoverished people who are dying of starvation we can hardly expect that they will help those of the nationality they dislike the most.

Further, there is a very real and definite reason for our wishing to keep them alive, and prevent them dying from starvation and helping them in the present even though we might feel that sooner or later charity from this country must be expected to fail. Many of us are not without hope that trading relations will in due time be restored between this country and Russia. There are signs of it already, and it is undoubtedly the only thing that will set Russia upon her feet. If we can have that, therefore, and once

again there can be a British commercial community in Leningrad—it is only there and not in Moscow that there are destitute British—then they will look after their own poor as they have done in the past, and for many generations. When one went there in 1911 there were many British poor, and amongst them elderly women, some of whom had taught English, others of whom had been sewing or dress-making, and through ill-health had gradually come to poverty. These were all cared for in a very beautiful Home which I used to visit, and where they were most comfortable and happy. There was the Charitable fund, just as in Paris, to give temporary relief. There was a Home for girls out of employment for a few weeks. In every way possible, and most effectually, the British community looked after its own poor. That is what the German commercial community is doing at the present time. They have four times the number of poor that we have, something like 600. They never dream of asking the people at home in the Fatherland to help. They are doing very fairly well, and can care for and relieve their own poor, and are glad to do it.

They have a large Home and I believe they would even extend its hospitality to some of our worst cases, but the poor creatures, as may easily be understood, have a great shrinking from going to a German home. They know how the war began, and feel they would be very unhappy there. In the end, of course, it may have to come to



it, but as I have said, many of us are hoping that it will not, and that British and Russian commercial relations may so improve that we have again a successful British community ready to bear its own burdens and relieve its own poor. It is worth while, therefore, I feel sure my readers will agree with me, not to let these unfortunates starve to death, as there is a prospect for them, and it may come unexpectedly and at any time, of the work of relief being carried out there in the place where it can be most effectively done and ought to be done.

It must be very difficult, however, for those in this country to realise what undeserved suffering has been inflicted upon British women in Russia. It must be indeed quite inexplicable to think of an administration that calls itself the Government of a country allowing it. Here is an instance that was given to me three years ago. In Moscow there lived all her life a very wealthy widow. Her husband had been one of those very prosperous Scottish merchants I have already mentioned, and she had great resources which she was determined, continually advised by her brother, to administer with a real sense of responsibility.

She was well known, therefore, as one of the most charitable and liberal people in Moscow. She, like her husband, had been one of the most liberal patrons of our Church. She had built the parsonage, now the Finnish Legation, and had helped the chaplain, as she helped me also, in my work. Her

heart had gone out in sympathy to the many British girls who were teaching and nursing in Moscow, and who could not be received into the family. She knew what it meant for those girls, as is now the case in Paris, to have to live in lodgings on staircases, where were many families, and where unprincipled men could come in, very often at all hours of the day and night. She built, therefore, a large hostel at great expense, known to the Revolution as her Hostel. It was wonderfully planned and carried out. Each girl had a little suite of rooms as at Oxford and Cambridge, consisting of a sitting room and bedroom, and little vestibule where she could put her furs and snow shoes, all enclosed by one door, just as at the University, where the girl could "sport her oak," as it is called, and have privacy. In the basement was a dining room for the use of all, where food was prepared and could be had cheaply. This was a tremendous boon to English girls who had to earn their living in Moscow. It is only one instance of the liberality of that very good woman. She had a beautiful house of her own, quite a modest one, considering her wealth, and when the Revolution came, workers and some of the lowest class were thrust in upon her, and in the end she was deprived of everything in her own house, but one little room, and in the end, incredible as it may seem, was deprived even of that and thrust out one night, when weak and ill, and left to die in the snow. Fortunately, though it could mean but little, some passers-by, going to

look at her and recognising her and knowing what she had done, carried her off with exclamations of sympathy to the Hostel which she had built, where there happened to be one bed and one room at liberty, and there they left her. After two or three days she died. It was a strange coincidence, "Bread cast on the waters seen after many days." For at least she was allowed to die quietly in bed and cared for in the place which she had built for others.

But what is one to think of an Administration under the rule of which such a thing as that is possible? I have told it at some length so that my readers can understand how there can be British destitute subjects in Russia, living in the depths of poverty and looking back, as those poor creatures did who tried to sell the temperance drink and the cakes, to wealth and refined surroundings, not only in their early life, but until the Revolution came and swept it all away.

I little expected when I left Russia at the end of June, 1926, determined, as I was, to make an appeal for them, that I should have the friendly co-operation of the Press and the very encouraging response that I have received. It is a strange thing, however, and difficult to understand, that the wealthy and privileged, both in rank and position, have made hardly any response. All the help that has come for these unfortunates has really come from those, with very few exceptions, only moderately well-off and from some really poor, literally the widow's mite. One very interesting letter I will venture to give:—

“I was sitting reading my book last night and stopped as I heard Daddy and Mother talking about a letter in the newspaper and the starving British women in Russia. I thought to myself as I listened I have still ten shillings of my Christmas present and I will send it. I asked our three maids and they gave me a shilling each, and my governess gave me two shillings, and so I am sending you fifteen shillings for your Fund.”

Then followed her name and perhaps at Daddy and Mother's suggestion she added, “Age 10 years.”

Never in all my experience, and I have had really to plead for my work all the time I have been a Bishop, have I felt more that I had a case of real and desperate need to put before a charitable public, and never, I may further say, have I felt more encouraged by the willing co-operation of the Press and the response made to it. I wish indeed it could be really understood by those unfortunate folk in Leningrad and I shall do the best I can, through our visiting chaplains at Riga and Helsingfors, most excellent men, to assure them of it, and let them know the real sympathy that is felt for them in this country, suffering as they undoubtedly are, not through faults of their own, but simply for their British nationality.

## CHAPTER X

### LENIN AND THE LENINISM HE HAS LEFT BEHIND HIM

LENIN is the one man who has left his name permanently not only upon Russia, but upon the world's history. He was both one of the most remarkable men who have ever lived, and also one of the very few who have accomplished literally and quite fully just what in early life he had carefully planned to do, and yet without very sanguine hopes that he would ever be able to. Unlike almost all his associates and the members of the Government which he had formed, he was purely Russian and well-born. Lenin, of course, was not his name, as most people know, but adopted for concealment during his days of exile in the Empire, when plotting and planning outside it, in other countries.

His real name was Vladimir Ilytch Ulianoff, and he was born at Simbirsk, on the Volga, some 56 years ago. His father was an official in the Ministry of Education, and became a member of the State Council and thus entered the lower ranks of the nobility. Ulianoff, therefore, was registered at his birth, "hereditary noble." The whole of the family,

apart from the parents, were all fiercely revolutionary. His two sisters and brothers were constantly watched by the police in consequence of their publicly expressed sentiments, and his brother Alexander—a rare thing even for such offences—was executed for his share in plotting the murder of Alexander III. This seems to have deeply embittered his brother Vladimir, and up to the age of 26 and 27 he too was continually plotting against the Government, and at length was exiled for three years, though like most other exiles he lived in a village in Siberia, and not in prison, and when his time was over and he was allowed, as exiles usually were, to leave Russia, he took very good care not to cross the frontiers again except for very brief and unsuspected visits, and went on plotting and planning and writing uninterruptedly in other countries, chiefly I believe in Switzerland and in our own.

His time and undoubted genius and all the pains that he could bestow upon it were given to considering how he could possibly destroy Russia, and, as time went on, our modern civilisation, which he appears to have hated with an undying hatred. Apparently he never planned or thought out anything that even from his point of view might take its place, and thereby be a benefit to his country, and when he succeeded in his one idea of destroying Russia, as Russia was then known to the rest of the world, he had nothing to put in its place, and had to own, as he did unreservedly, his disappointment and defeat. Looking at the

ruin that he had made, he is said to have frankly acknowledged, "We have made a mistake, have gone too far in seeking world revolution. Russia is not ready for it yet. Let us retrace our steps and enter upon a new economic policy." Briefly his political development, experience and accomplishment were as follows :—

When the Russian Social Democratic Party was first formed, he joined it and threw himself into all its deliberations with great energy. Conferences were held in different places, and the general feeling expressed during their deliberations was that they must develop gradually and if possible by legislation much as the better part of Labour thinks with us to-day, and probably will think still more in the future. To this policy, however, Lenin was furiously opposed, for what he wanted and was determined to have was real and Red Revolution and without loss of time, and finally at a conference held first in Brussels and later in London in 1903—how little we knew the significance of what was passing amongst us—he succeeded in splitting up the Party, the majority going with him, Bolsheviks, a word which means majority, and the Mensheviks, which means minority, still keeping to their own convictions.

From that time he planned and plotted and kept in the background in the hope that when the right moment came he could snatch at power, and he appears to have known that a great war was his only chance. All happened just as he had planned all his life. Of how

few that can be said. At 30 he had married Madame Kruskaya, and she was as ardent in the cause as he was, a thorough-going revolutionary, with no children, no home-life, just given up to the work and plans of her husband. Their house is said to have been more like a dug-out than a home, littered about with papers and without the least domestic comfort, no luxury, of course, or anything of the kind, for that did not in the least appeal to either of them. All that he wished was power, and when he had once seized upon it he never let go again as long as he was conscious.

We are all familiar, though it may be just as well to recall these things so that we may understand what that extraordinary personality has meant in Russian history, with the story of how he was passed through Germany in the famous sealed wagon with the help of the military authorities, and arrived in Petrograd in April, 1917, extremely well supplied with money, and began at once the corruption of the Army, already discontented and dissatisfied with their discipline, and which had been practically undermined when Kerensky abolished the salute and punishment. "Go home to your village and seize the land." This was his slogan and very effectual it was. The men simply streamed away from the trenches, and the country's protection was at an end. Certain Lettish regiments he kept on, as they could not return to their own country, still in the possession of the Germans, and made them the nucleus of those known afterwards as the Red Guards.



He was in danger of being arrested again and again, and would have been and kept in prison if Kerensky and others had been real men, for all of them knew what Lenin really was.

His first task on coming into power, as the beginning of his work of destruction, was to get peace, and the famous Brest-Litovsk Treaty with Germany followed. Many of his friends demurred, it is said, to the terms of that Treaty, but he smilingly said, "Sign. A signature on a *bourgeois* document brings no obligation for us. When we are strong enough we will remake Europe over again." Then with peace on the German frontier the way was perfectly clear, and no one I suppose in all history has set about a work of destruction with such eagerness and with such tremendous capacity to accomplish it.

No one before has destroyed so much of a country's wealth and well-being, nor sent so many innocent and unoffending people to their deaths, of all classes and of all professions and ranks of life. He seems to have been absolutely without feeling and utterly callous, and is stated to have said, "Let 90 per cent. of Russia's people perish if need be. What matter so long as 10 per cent. live to see world revolution." He is said to have smiled when he heard of terrible deaths, and that smile quite chilled the hearts of those who visited him, we are told.

Mrs. Snowden has given her valuable testimony on the state of things in Lenin's early days of power, and yet her book has had nothing like the

influence on public opinion in this country as its evident sincerity and conscientiousness entitle it to have. I would strongly recommend it to my readers, as also a most interesting article by Harold Williams, in the March *Contemporary Review*, for 1924, as well as an article by Mr. Bruce Lockhart, the Consul in Moscow, when I was there in 1916, written in the *Edinburgh Review* current in May, 1924. I have read nothing that throw so much light upon this sad period of Russian history as in those pages. It was not the *bourgeois* alone who went to their deaths in such thousands at this time, but workmen under suspicion, and peasants who would not give up their grain, and professional men, thus inflicting a deep wound upon Russian life which is festering still and I fear getting even more inflamed. Lenin really made Russia a graveyard, and constructed nothing whatever, unless it was to plant deep in every true Russian heart a stronger love of country and a deeper belief in God and His Providence, and a longing for the time to come when, as once and in happier days, they were at liberty to give full expression to both these ardent feelings of generous and simple natures.

Notwithstanding all this more and more do I feel convinced as time goes on that one of the greatest disasters that have befallen Russia during the last few years has been the death of Lenin. Few people can doubt, even though he does seem to have been a real incarnation of the destructive, that he was quite sincere in his conviction that the only way to build

up a system that commended itself to his judgment was to destroy that already in existence. To many of us his convictions were repulsive, abhorrent and even diabolical, but we can believe that they were convictions, and that he was not obsessed with a mere desire to destroy, but all his life through, from a comparatively early age, had nursed the hope of seeing something that he could carry out when the work of destruction was done.

When, as others have done, though on a much smaller scale, he had the opportunity to begin and carry out his theories and found they would not work, he was outspoken, and I should think sincere, in saying so. Probably it would not cost him the very least effort to do this, nor would he hesitate for a single moment. He was far too strong a man for that. No one who has ever lived, probably, but Lenin, would feel practically no concern at all, in saying at once, "We have been mistaken, the world is not ready," and then begin to think and plan how he could, I will not say undo, but make the best of the situation, and enter upon a policy that would work. Unfortunately before he could do more than make a very small beginning in this direction he died, and his death was clearly a very great misfortune, for apparently he did not live long enough to convince many of those who had been most closely connected with him. No one could really undo what he had done but himself, at any rate neither so quickly nor so effectively. Had he lived, as he was not really an

old man, he would probably have done a very great deal in starting Russia off on altogether different lines, and would have kept firm hold on the reins of government until he had seen something definite established by way of restoration of that private enterprise which he began when he restored the currency.

What a lesson it would have been for the whole world if one of the strongest men it has ever produced, alive and efficient, could say: "I tried Communism for one of the greatest Empires in the world and it failed, and now that Empire is going forward on non-Communist lines." Just as Communism, as an inspiring ideal for social life with mankind living for each other and for the whole, with self ruled out, dazzled for a short time the early Church and then with the duplicity it brought forth in Ananias and Sapphira, and the poverty which made the Church in Jerusalem a burden to the other Churches, so its recrudescence in the political sphere and in our own time, and in the largest Empire in which to work, and again failing utterly, surely would have afforded a lesson to mankind to last for many generations, if not for all time. Lenin, it appears to me, if he had only lived, would have been one of the most valuable and instructive of modern human experiences.

But there is another reason for regretting his death, for many of us think that we are going to have another "ism" added to the many "isms" we have already, and that is Leninism. Some have been bold enough to say that it even means another

religion. What an irony it would be if that one Government which has tried and is trying still to root out and destroy religion of every kind amongst the Russian people should only succeed in establishing another. Several observers both outside and inside have drawn attention to this danger, notably Mr. Arthur Ransome, in the *Manchester Guardian*, and my own experiences give me the same forebodings. Everywhere I noticed this year, and even three years ago, in shops and theatres, at railway stations, in the streets and squares, at the theatre and in other places of meeting—not as yet one is thankful to think in churches—pictures of Lenin.

There used to be portraits of the Tsar in all public places, in shops, however small, post-offices, railway stations everywhere, or pictures of the saints, or of our Lord and of the Holy Mother and Divine Child, but all these are gone completely, swept away, and in their place is Lenin, always Lenin, and usually in short jacket and baggy trousers, one hand, the left, thrust into a pocket, the other gesticulating, with a small cap on his head, looking down, and addressing an audience. There is, we are told, the "Lenin corner" in factories and workshops, draped with black and red, and a bust or portrait with the text "Lenin is dead, but Leninism still lives." A light is thrown upon this corner by night. In the greatest Store in Moscow, where I went to see their methods of business, I saw in one corner, and probably there are many, his portrait set amidst hangings of red,

and with a light thrown upon the face. Everywhere, except in the Churches themselves, Christ is gone and Lenin is in His place. Here surely are the beginnings of something akin to worship.

Then there is that striking Mausoleum just outside the Kremlin, where his body lies embalmed and within a glass case. It is said to be his body by the authorities, though there are many who are of opinion that the method of embalming was not successful, being carried out too hastily and imperfectly, and that when it was found to be decomposing very quickly, a wax model was made of face and hands. However this may be what is there in public view serves exactly the same purpose. I looked very closely myself and both face and hands certainly had a very wax-like appearance. Every day, from five to six, a long procession of many thousands of people of all sorts and conditions and of all ages pass, as they would say, before Lenin. I went of course as I was anxious to go everywhere and see everything of importance likely to help me in forming a correct idea of what Moscow is at this time, and I must own that I was very much impressed by the way in which everything was arranged.

The Mausoleum is a large and rather plain wooden structure, but not without some ornamentation. It is said that it will be replaced by a more imposing structure of stone or marble as time goes on, though I am rather inclined to doubt this myself as the Moscow population had just condemned a proposal to place a statue of Karl

Marx in a prominent place near the Kremlin, which was shown to me as I passed, on the ground that it would be very costly, and Moscow could not at present afford it. When I and my friend from the Legation arrived, and he presented his official card, we were at once admitted without having to take our places at the end of the long queue, and were shown every courtesy by the soldiers on guard—for it is carefully guarded by sentries day and night.

All is very dramatically and impressively arranged. We passed along a corridor, well-lighted and draped entirely in red, then down many stairs to another corridor, also draped in red and well-lighted, moving very slowly in the procession, and in due time coming out into a square hall very brightly lighted and entirely draped in red, and in the centre of which in its large glass case the body lies, very expressionless and very clear in the features, clothed in a robe from neck to feet. Soldiers were on guard with their backs to the case, looking down, still and solemn, just as with our Sovereigns and others, when lying-in-state. There was really a great solemnity about the whole place, and the people appeared to be conscious of it as they moved slowly round seeing the body on every side and, absolutely silent, hardly even exchanged looks with one another.

I must own to being very much impressed, and on reaching the open air, said at once to myself, "There I feel sure of it, is the beginning of another cult, one more religion in the world." If it is left undis-

turbed—for one can never be sure what will happen in the immediate or distant future in Russia—and still more if a permanent building takes its place, then it will become like Mecca or the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a resort for pilgrims throughout the year. What more in these days is needed as the beginning of a religion than to have a founder who is dead, leaving not only a name but writings. In Lenin's case also there will be portraits already venerated, and daily pilgrimages to a shrine, and this in a country where its population are almost, if not quite, the most mystical and religious people in the world. Nothing could have been simpler than the story of Bernadette at Lourdes, but yet it has left a permanent mark and distinct influence on religious thought and life in the Roman Communion.

The next news in Russia will be, and particularly in these psychic days, that pilgrims have had visions or dreams in which Lenin has appeared and said this or that, or wonderful things will be said to have happened, possibly cures wrought, at his shrine. Father John of Kronstadt and others only locally known in Russia, have left their names and influence behind them, but Lenin has been made known through every part of the Russian Empire and far outside its borders. It is already being felt and claimed that he was not an ordinary man, something more than man, one whose place can never again be filled by anyone else. The chair in which he sat at the head of the Council table has a rope across it so that no one may sit in his former



place and no one, I believe, has ever yet done so. The dates when he occupied it are carved upon the back and it is set apart, as he is himself, in Russian thought. Then there are his books, his teaching, his propaganda (perhaps not his repudiation), but the Communism which he tried and which though he failed will still be called by his name and, possibly, in spite of those first steps he took to undo it, Leninism will still be cherished and perhaps for many, associated with class consciousness and class war.

It is quite possible that none of these forebodings may be fulfilled, but amongst the many cults and religious systems which still, after centuries, influence mankind and even modern thought, few, it appears to me, have had a more promising start than Leninism. I have called Leninism a religion, for want of a better term, but I do not mean that it will have anything about it that we consider to be of a religious character, as helping men to Communion with God, either through Christ, as with Christians, or Mahomet as in Islam, or Buddha, or other religious influences, but as rather taking the place which God alone should fill, in the minds of those who cannot receive Him, and yet who feel they must have something else of the supernatural, to take His place.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE SOUL OF RUSSIA

ONE can, I think, speak of the soul of a nation, though not of course in the same sense in which we speak of the human soul, but with something more in our minds than national spirit, or even ideal. When Nelson ran up his message to the Fleet at Trafalgar, with its "England expects," he was thinking of that which had been his ideal all through his years of service! But the soul means something more than an ideal as it suggests that in a nation's life and development there is much more than the merely material and transitory. Something, that is to say, which deeply affects the character of its people and which persists and lives from generation to generation, and which differs from the influences which are at work in the development of other peoples and other races.

We speak of the national spirit, of the "spirit of the age," why not of the national soul! It is far older than Egyptian thought to acknowledge that there is something more than the merely material in our surroundings, though Tutankhamen's tomb and surroundings, for those of us privileged to see them, showed how strongly those ancient Egyptians felt that all

material things had also a spiritual value, and that in burying their dead king, they felt they must give him still those material surroundings he had during life, so that their spiritual equivalents might go with his spirit into the other world. Long before those civilised days, primitive man appears to have had the same idea, for in burying their chiefs they buried with them their horses and dogs, and bows and arrows, with some idea, I should imagine, that the influence they had exercised in the daily life of the chief was still existent and would go with his spirit into what they could only call, with our human knowledge of things, "the happy hunting grounds." I cannot think myself that even savages thought as they laid their dead in the ground with what had been theirs in life, that they would be of any further use to them, but that their spiritual equivalents would be still of use in a spiritual existence.

These thoughts came home to me with great force as I talked one New Year's Day with Mr. Howard Carter at Tutankhamen's Tomb, and later after speaking of them in the course of an address in a country village, a man came to me afterwards and told me that he had been a great traveller and that he had heard of—I am not sure now that he did not say actually met with—a primitive people in Africa who still kept the tradition of breaking up the vessels and knives and platters a man had used in his lifetime so that their souls could be released and accompany his soul into the spirit world. Perhaps some such thought

as this lies behind "Man shall not live by bread alone," and that there is in all our daily food, and surroundings of daily life something much more than the material, influencing our spiritual nature.

It is with such thoughts as these in my mind that I am now wanting to write of "The Soul of Russia," just as Dean Inge, in one of the most suggestive chapters of his book, "England," writes at length of the "Soul of the Empire." Just as also when I first had the honour of an interview with King Albert in 1917, at the Belgian Headquarters, and was thinking most of the time we spent together of that never-to-be-forgotten picture in *Punch*, where the German Emperor is represented as saying to him, "And so you have lost everything," and he answers, "But not my soul," I thought also at the same time of the national spirit that he had himself strengthened and stimulated, so that Belgium, which lost so much in the war that it has never quite recovered, perhaps never may quite fully, had yet kept and preserved its Soul!

When we speak of the charm of Russia and of Russians, and all Anglo-Russians I have ever known are very conscious of that charm, perhaps it is "deep calling unto deep," and Russia's soul touching ours. I have ventured, therefore, upon this chapter so that I might try and describe—it is not a very easy task—that spirit in Russian character, not perhaps very evident in these terrible years, which though intangible and strangely elusive is very real, very

persistent, very strong, and certain to determine Russia's place in the time to come.

In speaking, too, in this chapter of the "spirit" and the spiritual, I shall ask my readers to take a very wide view indeed of what those words mean, and think of everything in Russian life now that is not merely material. St. Paul is our great leader in this large, broad-minded and far-reaching view of what is spiritual, when he mentions amongst the other activities of the spirit, and the different ways it works in our human affairs, "The gifts of healing by the same Spirit." In the porch of St. James's, Piccadilly, is a tablet to Sir George Johnson, Physician to Queen Victoria, and formerly a friend of my own, and there is engraved upon it, "The gifts of healing by the same Spirit." Why should we therefore not take all the influences at work in human life and character not merely material—if *anything* is so—and unite them altogether as representing the spiritual endowments and activities of a nation's soul. When the Evangelist speaks of a great future for mankind and says they shall bring the honour and the glory of the nations into it, he surely is not thinking of anything material at all, but of something absolutely imperishable and which after taking its place in their history has its fruition and completion hereafter.

Russia is absolutely unlike any other country in the world in its appeal to the Anglo-Saxon. Surely this is "deep calling unto deep," and soul touching soul. In a past number of the *Contemporary Review*,

quite early in the war, I drew attention to the real spiritual leads that Russia had given to all the rest of the belligerent Powers, leads I fear which though given were not very closely followed. There was : (1), Her treatment of her prisoners, which deeply interested me, as most of them were sent to Siberia, not the Siberia of so many people's imagination, with which past stories of convict gangs had familiarised them, but a Siberia of happy villages, with interesting daily life, and a very beautiful country. Nor were they sent into convict establishments, or camps constructed for the purpose, or gloomy fortresses, or even monasteries, such as are crowded with prisoners at this time, but they were sent to share the open life of the villagers, and follow their trades, if they had any, or make themselves of use, and lead a really human life. The Governor of Akmolinsk, beyond the Urals, which I know far better than any other, issued a characteristic proclamation in which he said, "Peasants, large numbers of the enemy are coming to live amongst you, and it is hoped that you will receive them and welcome them into your village life. Remember that when we take prisoners, they cease to be our enemies and become our guests, receive them therefore as your guests and let them share your life till the war is over."

What a different story many of our civilians, officers and rank and file would have to tell us if that proclamation had been issued and obeyed in the country where they became prisoners of war. I think this can be claimed as a real *spiritual* lead.

(2) There was the absolute prohibition of the vodka, and, as time went on, every other intoxicant, not limited in sale as in our own country, but absolutely prohibited as unsuitable for any citizen while his nation was at war. This lead was very faithfully and loyally followed, obstinate and often mulish as the Russian is. A chaplain of mine at the time, meeting an old peasant whom he knew in Moscow, and knowing his weakness, addressed him with, "Well, Ivan Ivanovitch, and what about the vodka?" "Ah, the vodka," said the peasant, looking up at him, and shaking his head slowly, "Ah, sir, I liked my vodka and I miss my vodka, but still," he said, resolutely, "I am sure it is better as it is."

Vodka had taken a leading part, I fear, in Russian conviviality before the war, and in dull and monotonous lives one can easily understand how it comes to do so, if it can be obtained, but Russia's idea at that time was that conviviality was out of place when the nation was at war, and at war, it was generally felt, for a just and righteous cause.

This, in the third place, enabled Russia to give the rest of the belligerent Powers another strong spiritual lead, in regarding the war itself from a religious point of view.

Russia made her declaration of war, or I feel sure it would have been very inoperative, on behalf of the injured Slavs in Serbia, just as they had wished to do, but had not the power, for the Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina some years before. It was

felt throughout the country therefore to be a just war and one they could commend to God and for which they could ask His blessing.

Everything therefore connected with the war and the joining up from the villages, and everything during the conduct of the war, had to be closely united with religious services. Conscripts, or those called to the Colours, always left their villages after a service, in the open air, as the church could not contain those who wished to be present, and the Gospels were read and prayers offered, and all of them blessed, and as they marched away and turned for a last look at their homes and church they could see their priest with his hands raised in blessing. Their priests accompanied the troops and marched with them, and their services, and especially the Holy Communion, were celebrated, not as I fear was often the case with us, in some very small place with very few in attendance, but in the open air, and in the presence of all the troops, officers and rank and file.

Before the first two years of the war were completed I was again in Russia, and was deeply impressed by the way in which the Russian people still, notwithstanding their terrible losses and deep disappointments, cherished the idea that the war was the just cause of God. The hymn which we translate : "God the All-Terrible," was sung with fervour, and was quite different from the battle-hymns of all the other fighting Powers, though the battle-hymn of the Republic, which seems to have displaced the real



American National Anthem, most nearly approaches it, especially in the verse :—

“ He hath sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat ;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat ;  
Oh ! be swift, my soul, to answer Him ; be jubilant, my feet !  
Our God is marching on.”

This lead is that which Israel's prophets gave when assuring them that as they were entering upon a just war, the cause was not their own, but that of the Righteous God, Who wished to see justice done. All these leads, given in undoubted good faith, lifted the war entirely out of the material, with its idea of gain and advantage, into the realm of the spiritual, making a really spiritual appeal. It is not an argument, therefore, against the spiritual side of Russian character to say that such terrible and unexpected crimes have been done in Russia, for this so many hope and believe is a phase only, just as backsliding is in many a real disciple's life, but knowing what there has been of the spiritual in Russian character and development we may venture to look forward to the time when these activities will not only have survived, but be found to have a much stronger influence than ever on the progress of the race.

The Patriarch Tikhon's influence was exercised by reason of his spiritual character, and because he made a spiritual appeal, as he had nothing of outward rank or display in his material surroundings. No one could have looked more humble or unassuming (or in his own room almost insignificant), yet his soul spoke straight to the nation's soul, and that soul answered

him in its loyalty and obedience and will still answer him with even greater gratitude, loyalty and obedience in the years to come.

Few expressions in Scripture appeal to me more than "Deep calleth unto deep," and its assurance that spirit calleth unto spirit, and soul speaks to soul and is answered, and therefore, though I am expecting material prosperity for that great Empire in the time to come, I am expecting even more a valuable *spiritual* contribution from her people to the common stock of Christendom. The Patriarch's message in reminding his countrymen of their spiritual treasures, spoke of faith, hope and charity, or love. There can be no doubt that Russia's faith is much more real, deep and loyally prized than at any other time in her history. No one goes to church, no one can profess religion, no one can seek to increase its influence, or their own church life, except by having to face possible consequences of the gravest character.

Russia's Faith, that great endowment of the soul, is clearer and brighter than ever before and more convincingly held. Then there is Hope, that second of our Christian ideals. We have only to talk with Russian refugees who are now in every capital in Europe, at least every capital that I myself have visited, to learn how strongly they still cling on to the hope of Russia's future, and that a great one, worthy of a great people. Every Anglo-Russian I know or have met is full of hope for Russia's future.

When I was in the States six years ago I went to see Mr. Hoover, so well known in this country and on the Continent for his management of Belgium's resources and who was in former days a mining engineer working with my friend Mr. Leslie Urquhart, and who was familiar with my mining camp mission in Siberia, from his personal knowledge of the places I had visited in 1911 and 1912, and so received me with great cordiality. In the course of our conversation I asked him if he felt convinced that Russia would have a great future, and he answered unhesitatingly, "Oh, yes indeed." And when I further asked him if he thought so because of his own unique knowledge of her vast resources, he replied, "No, no, it is not because of anything material at all. I am thinking only of Russia's ideals."

I have many clear-cut cameos of memory, so to speak, as I look back upon my 18 years of an Episcopate exercised in so many different countries, but one of the brightest I have is that of Mr. Hoover, who may some day be President of the United States, and who was then Food Controller, sitting in that large office off Broadway, with the typing machines clicking on every side, for he apparently did not allow himself a private room, with his eyes on the stars, as he thought of Russia's future, material things for the time being entirely in abeyance, as he thought of her ideals and their certain realisation.

And then not only is there Faith and Hope still strong in the minds of that great people, but there is

also Love. The Russian naturally is a most affectionate creature, kindly and friendly, as I said in my first chapter, though with all the limitations of a not fully developed race. Children are most loving and affectionate creatures and yet do some terrible things when provoked and in passion, because life has not as yet taught them the great lessons of self-control, but they are loving little creatures, and this is what one feels about Russians when having any real experience of them in their homes and in their working lives. All my countrymen and countrywomen who have known Russia will agree with me in saying this of them, and this capacity for affection, these really loving dispositions in the better days which we hope are yet to come for them and for other peoples, will undoubtedly be perfected by reason of what they have had to endure. "Love suffereth long and is kind."

Again let us in this connection specially remember that Russia has never had the opportunities of advancing in civilisation as the rest of Europe has done, nor in the exercise of her Christian religion, and yet let us reflect on what in spite of this she has shown she possesses in the realm of the spiritual.

Take Russia's art, and specially as shown in painting. Her galleries are much smaller than those of any other country, but her artists make their ideas simply *live* as you look at their paintings. Take Verestchagin, for instance, who was known last century in this country from his battle pictures, but whose real gifts were shown in his many paintings

of Eastern mosques and Eastern life in such great centres as Bokhara and Samarkand. As you look at those wonderful and glowing colours and the picturesque and striking groups the artist depicts, you have the feeling that the East is just *living* before you. And that I suppose is the purpose of art—to make something live as you see its embodiment, whether in sculpture or in painting, and are conscious of the idea in the artist's mind as he worked. There are very many far larger art galleries in Europe, but there are few, if any, which give you the sense of Life conveyed from the artist's mind to your own as in Russia.

Then there is their literature, so different and entirely distinct from our own. Sometimes a little unconvincing, because we are constitutionally unable to follow the workings of a mind which result in the conduct and actions described by the writer, but no one can read Dostoievsky, or Tolstoi, or any other well-known Russian writer without feeling that he is in touch with living people.

Again, there is the drama. Tchekov has been for some time claiming the attention of British playgoers, who do not quite follow sympathetically, or sometimes even intelligently, the plot, and who sometimes resent the conclusion, but yet feel that they are touching Russia in the scenes before them. The play lives. There are those sketches given from time to time by the Chauve-Souris, from the Bat Theatre, in Moscow, and in all the Russian sketches they give,

but especially in their "Easter Morning," and "The Night of the Nativity," very hesitatingly allowed to pass our Censor, their large audiences must feel that they are in touch with something that is specially and characteristically Russian. It is not our life, we all feel, but it is, and very truly, theirs. It is a living reality. Even Russian dancing, which never fails in this country to bring large audiences together, just as the strange and pathetic singing of the Cossack choir does, has a charm and spiritual appeal quite its own. It is not that the dancing itself in mere technique is superior to our own. Anton Dolin, who formerly danced as a Russian, and who is really an Irishman, and Ninette de Valois, an Irishwoman, and one or two other well-known English dancers with Russian names, are quite as alert and efficient and nimble, some would even say dance more efficiently in some ways, than the Russian members of the Ballet, but yet in such a production as "Petrushka," which I have seen again this year in old Russia, there is something in its conception and in its achievement that no other nation can put before an audience and of which you can only say, "This is Russia, and Russia's spirit."

I am well aware that this chapter may be to some of my readers somewhat unconvincing, as from the day on which as it was so generally said in this country Russia let us down, and very badly, the news from that country has been anything but reassuring, but yet I have written from very

deep convictions and with the confidence and assurance that all who have really known and cared for Russia in the past will agree with me, and that notwithstanding all the terrible events of these later years, Russia, compared with other countries, will have something specially and distinctively Russian and very valuable to contribute to the world's spiritual future.

## CHAPTER XII

### RUSSIA'S FUTURE

It is a truism to say that a country with no past can have no future. Truisms, however, are at least true, and the well-known saying has, I feel, a special application for Russia. The Russian past to the historical student just abounds in the fascinating, the instructive, and romantic. One can only touch on two or three of its more recent features.

As in our own case, the hardy "Norsemen" played a great part in their national development, but not aggressively, as with us, after being summoned to the nation's aid. Some historians probably would call the coming of the Norse leaders Rurik, Sineus and Truvor an invasion, but it was in answer to the invitation of the Slav Republic of Novgorod that they went, which invitation was worded in the chronicles of the times—"Thus our land is great and fruitful, but there is no order in it. Come and reign and rule over us." On the death of the other two, Rurik became sole ruler.

Five centuries later came what has been called the St. Petersburg period, when Peter the Great brought his country into closer association with Western



Europe, and though they have so carefully destroyed his statues under the present régime, he will still be deservedly called "Great" in the Russia still to come. A hundred years later came that remarkable woman, Catherine the Second, also called Catherine the Great, but I doubt if she will be so named in the future, as her influence in Russian development cannot be compared to that of her great predecessor. From that time onwards the Romanoff tradition was maintained, and held its own, but nothing more than that can be claimed for it, and all the world knows how tragically it all came to an end, never, at least so many of us believe, to be revived again as far as its influence is concerned.

Looking back over close upon a thousand years one can see how Russian civilisation, with its distinctive literature and art, its interesting and unique features, has slowly but surely and steadily progressed. There has, of course, been this tremendous and tragical set-back during the last ten years, but what will ten years, which after all has only adversely affected the urban life of Russia, mean in the history of one of the vastest Empires territorially, and with the largest possibilities in the whole world? We must also always judge of the future of a race by what we feel there is in it to become. There are races just as there are some ancient civilisations which are profoundly interesting, say, at the present time, but very few of us can see in their national character and what it promises anything that seems likely to greatly affect

the human race, or bring them to anything like a leading influence in the world.

In our own case, when Sir Wilfred Laurier came to visit us for the first time at the close of the last century, he came from what he felt was a young country, and was familiar with all the sayings of that time—I am not sure that we may not say of this also—that the future of the British Empire was at Ottawa, and that this little island had well played its part, but that part was now over, and that we, looking out to our Dominions, might feel somewhat like the Baptist as he thought of new influences increasing while his own decreased, but Sir Wilfred, on the other hand, frankly admitted how astounded he was to find in British life and the state of British institutions and the general British outlook that our own eyes were by no means on the past, but on our future. He said, it may be remembered by some of my readers, “Why, you are a young race. All the marks of youthfulness are in your nation’s life. You have a great future to look forward to, and not merely an inspiring past.”

Then another thing we have also to take into account when thinking of a race or a people, however small, is whether we can feel that they have anything to give to our common civilisation, for I am not one myself who believe that our civilisation is on the downward course, but, on the other hand, think it likely, unless we are very faithless indeed in Europe, to have greater influence than ever. The enthusiasm with which the World Call has been received in our

own country, the great anxiety shown on all sides in our Church, notwithstanding the inadequate remuneration given to our clergy and the difficulty in keeping up the Central Fund of a Diocese, show clearly enough whether we are of opinion that we have anything to give to the world in these important years. Let us consider, therefore, what Russia has to contribute to the common stock of the world's civilisation.

(1) Russia has the valuable, and as yet unique, contribution to offer, of a great nation in which "the greatest social experiment ever yet made in the history of the world has been tried and utterly failed." Communism essayed with such an opportunity that it has never had before, with every aid and advantage that such a national experiment could have without any opposition, and with real brains and ability behind it, and without the possibility of interference from outside, has been tried, and very slowly and gradually, without any haste or counter movement of any importance, come to utter failure. This is not at all too much to say, for Lenin said it, and Stalin enforces it from day to day, and very possibly before these chapters are in print may have admitted it to the whole world and openly discarded Communism.

It is not merely the failure of Communism tried on the very greatest scale that could ever be hoped for, but the complete triumph of that individuality and capitalism—I cannot think of any other word to use at the moment—which it was intended to

destroy. Russia will present to the coming generation very fully and convincingly indeed, because then her country will be freely opened out to the traveller and writer and business firms, a great Empire of peasant proprietors and small capitalists—the *greatest* nation of individual proprietors and small owners—all, for some time at least, inspired with a horror and detestation of a system (whether they call it Bolshevism or Communism does not at all matter) which bade fair at one time to deprive them of everything in life which was an incentive to industry, and which alone made work and home and recreation and worship worth having.

(2) There will be Russia's contribution to the Christendom of the future, that which their mystical spirit will give, and which will be considered in a more united Christendom than that of to-day as one of its most valuable and convincing features. More and more does the experimental view of the Christian religion appeal to thoughtful men and women in all countries. There must, it is felt, when some heroic life of self-sacrifice, some high type of character, some career which throughout its course is marked by not only high ideals, but very real deeds of service, is presented to the mind, come inevitably and instinctively the thought, "What is the driving power behind all this?"

A doctor who, when visiting a very populous place in Central China where there were a number of very brainy young Chinese students, told me that he was scornfully

refused an opportunity of speaking to them about the Christian Faith, but some time later—the plague in the meantime had ravaged that particular country—he received a letter from one of them asking him to send up a missionary who could give them instruction in the Christian religion. He did so, and on visiting them later asked what change had come over them. “I suppose those medical missionaries we first sent up to you had something to say to you? What was it?” They replied, “They never said a single word to us. Their work was enough, for it made us think ‘What is the driving power behind all this? It comes from their religion, that’s clear. We should like to know something more about it.’”

Russia’s Liturgy, beautiful and moving as it is, and Russia’s Church organisation will remain, I should imagine, just what they are in other Slav countries, and I do not suppose for one single moment that they will affect other churches in their institutional life; but Russia’s mystical spirit, the reality which their sense of the Presence of Christ in their worship brings with it, the personal way in which the peasant realises God as He shared our human life, will be a most precious contribution when the rest of Christendom really understands what Russian personal religion really can be, though they received their Church and all that it brought to them a thousand years after the rest of us.

In my first Audience with the Emperor 15 years ago, he spoke particularly of all this, and said, “You will

find out the more you see of us that my people are intensely mystical in their religion," and the light which shone in his own eyes as he spoke told me how real to him, Prayer and Communion with His Lord were, not only in his private life, but as he stood in church, as he loved to do, side by side with some peasant or worker during that incomparable Office.

(3) Then there is the development, on an unprecedented scale, of Russia's vast resources. One can hardly exaggerate their extent in land and forests, in coal and minerals and precious stones, and the "oil" that is perhaps considered just now the most valuable possession a nation can have. All these resources are practically undeveloped and unused, and with a population already large, yet far indeed from being adequate, prolific as the Russians are, to the development of such great potential wealth. All the world, if I may use the expression, may have an opportunity of lending a hand in Russia's development of her resources, and especially, as I have already said, the Anglo-Saxon.

When I was in the United States for seven of the most interesting months I have ever spent in my life six years ago, I had to my great surprise and gratitude the opportunity of addressing the Chambers of Commerce in the important States of America, beginning with Cleveland, Ohio. It was a most delightful and valuable experience for me, as it enabled me to address all sorts and conditions of men, Jews and Christians,

men of religion and of no religion, and of every kind of nationality, and especially Germans. In all cases I spoke on behalf of Anglo-American unity, and suggested various ways in which I thought this could be made our permanent experience; but especially as I concluded I used to say, "But quite apart from sentiment and quite apart from careful study of each other's point of view, the thing that perhaps may bring us most closely together in the future will be having something to do together, and that opportunity will come when we may be allowed to co-operate in setting Russia upon her feet. She has the most valuable resources and possessions in the whole world, and I firmly believe that Russia will pay her debts, and the only way in which that can be really done will be by concessions and opportunities of development. Anglo-Saxon leadership is absolutely invaluable, and I picture our two nations working together in a really chivalrous spirit, not only for their own advantage, but for the advantage of Russia also." This idea was received with great enthusiasm in every Chamber of Commerce I addressed.

Russia, therefore, will have something most valuable to give, not only to the world at large, but, which concerns us more closely, to ourselves. Again, as in the times past that I have known, British efficiency, engineering, technical ability in all its many varieties, capital, industry, leadership will all have their place, and help perhaps to give careers where the Colonies do not attract, as they always suggest to the young

Englishman that he is to make his home there, while in Russia, and still in Europe, he will think of himself as there for a time to do his bit and still have his home in the Old Country.

Thoughtful Russians, who even if they do not know much personally about our own country, yet know our countrymen in theirs—I should fancy that certain members of the Soviet Government have much the same feeling if they would admit it—are of opinion that there is something characteristic of both our nationalities, fitting us for co-operation in the future. I remember when I was in Moscow when the Revolution was already casting its shadow upon many minds, at a great gathering of British and Russians, the latter all of the highest rank, one of their leading orators, in proposing the toast of the British Empire, used these remarkable words: “Our two races are markedly different and distinct from each other. We Russians are emphatically what you British are not in temperament and general character. You are reserved and we are not, on the contrary very emotional, in every way different. Why should I labour the point? For it ought to be remembered that national contrasts need not exclude co-operation, but being complementary to each other, may indeed promote it. At any rate we Russians know this,” he said, with great enthusiasm, “when you British give your word we know that we can take your hand, and it is upon that that the great British Empire has been built up and rests securely to-day, and it is



for that reason that I raise my glass and wish success to the great British Empire."

I have never seen a gathering of my own countrymen—and those were not given by any means to great demonstrations of feelings nor men who wear their hearts on their sleeves—so moved and enthusiastic. It just appealed, I felt, to the very best that was in them to have it said that the British Empire did not rest upon traditions or national wealth, or national ability, or national use of world opportunities, but upon that simple and appealing confidence felt by other nations, and the belief that we were entitled to their respect because when we gave our word they could take our hand with confidence.

Finally, the nation most likely to survive—all history shows it—is that which has real ideals. Let us just think over for a moment some of the leading races in the world just now as far as populations are concerned, and think of their national characteristics, institutions and especially their ideals, and I think we shall find that some of them at least appear to have no ideals at all, and are as certain to vanish from the world as completely as so many others have done in the past, leaving no trace at all behind them, except what the archæologists can find. As far as we are concerned, except by name, they have practically no influence whatever upon our modern thought and conduct and activities. They have in no way contributed to our inventions, or the amenities of our everyday life. Then there are those in the past who

have filled a very great place indeed and possessed arts and a knowledge of science and even engineering skill which seem to us to be completely lost. They are gone, however, completely gone, and their place knows them no more.

Let us consider, on the other hand, the Roman civilisation contemporary with some of those I have just mentioned, the Latin people, and Roman ideals of domestic and political life. Modern Italy did not suggest that it was representing the future of a great people with inspiring ideals some 50 years ago, but consider Italy now and the appeal that has been made to the old Roman spirit, and the rekindling of the consciousness of old Latin ideals, and note how its old men are dreaming dreams and its young men seeing visions, and then we can form some idea of what ideals mean in the history of a nation. Above all, think of the Jews, a people who for centuries have been deprived of country and national institutions, wanderers in every part of the world and with the highest ideals that any race has ever yet had, and which, neither they nor any one else can doubt, assure them of a future.

Remember what Mr. Hoover said in his Food Control Office, in Broadway, explaining that his hope and confidence in the future for Russia was neither in "wealth, might or power," but in her ideals. Ideals which are specially cherished, illiterate as they are said to be, by Russia's peasantry and the common people. When I was travelling during the last days

of the war very close to the Arctic Circle—the only way of reaching Russia at that time, by way of Haparanda and Torneo—I had Mr. Stanley Washburn as my companion, one of our war correspondents at that time, though an American, and who was just as enthusiastic as myself about the Russian people, and he told me that on one occasion when in the trenches he was talking with a number of private soldiers, and one of them said, “We have not the education of the enemy. We have not their military training and equipment. We have poor weapons, and sometimes none at all. We are only poor fellows, most of whom can neither read nor write, but,” kindling up, “we have our own ideas of faith and duty, and there are 170 millions of us.” Faith and duty will endure!

I shall indeed have failed most miserably in writing this chapter unless I have helped some at least to be hopeful and indeed confident as to not only a future but a very great future for the Russian people.

Two things stand out amongst the many which have caused people in this country to form a great dislike and mistrust for the policy of the present Administration in Russia. They are its attitude towards Family Life and Religion, and this is because the Communist Government clearly recognises that these two are the great obstacles in its way. I have shown, I hope, fairly clearly, again and again, that my hopes for the future of Russia rest chiefly upon its peasantry, and their making their influence more and more widely felt in the public opinion and the activities of the country.

Under the present Soviet Government life seems to me to become more and more hopeless in the great towns and cities of the country. I have described this in my articles the "Everyday Life of the People" and "Political Conditions and Prospects," but we must remember that in every town and city in the world there is always flowing into its life, from outside, the purer and more vigorous life, like some freshening and purifying stream, from its country-side. Thus it is with the comparatively small town and city life of Russia. The life of its sturdy peasantry with their far simpler outlook is ever freshening and vivifying the industrial life of Russia.

Let us consider, therefore, what this life of the country is in that great Empire and how entirely opposed to any Communist aim or Administration, it is likely to prove.

Russian village life is based fundamentally upon its homes and its families, and it must always be remembered that, as soon as such life began for mankind, its unit was the family. Any community, however small or large, if civilised at all, and with any real prospects of survival, is a collection of families and homes. Moreover, from the state of its home life, its domestic ideals and its family unity, one may always know the character of its public life, whether it is good or bad, and what the prospects of its survival. Let us take the Jewish race, more influential now in the different parts of the world than in all its previous history, and note how family and

domestic duty have always been its chief ideals. Just as in the long life of the great Roman Republic, we find the same explanation of its longevity. The mothers were the leading personalities in each State. The mothers of Israel stand out in the Bible just as the mothers of the Gracchi and of the other great families are equally conspicuous in Roman history.

Also let us reflect upon public sentiment in our own country, for a great deal is expressed in sentiment. In what other country will the song "Home, Sweet Home" move the audience to such deep feeling as with us? What a hush comes over the whole gathering! I have seen tears in the eyes of strong men on those occasions—and what an indication it is of true English feeling. How much light it throws on our past history, and explains how our strongest men have gone out into the world and extended our Empire, because they went from good homes, where mothers by their teaching and fathers by their example fitted their children to bring out the best that was in them.

Communism, on the other hand, has as its leading "ideals" the convictions that social communities are collections of individuals, and not of homes or families. Its latest legislation, therefore, has been to facilitate divorce and so strike another blow at family life. Marriages are divided into two classes—unregistered and registered, the former of which, however, we need not consider, as it practically means free love. Registered marriages, however, are the Soviet idea of what are to be recognised as legal

unions. The new arrangements make divorce easier than ever. If either of the parties should change their mind within an hour of marriage divorce can at once take place. More divorces now take place in Russia than ever, and no difficulty is put in the way. The Government is quite logical in these arrangements, for, merely looking at the individual, it is much better that two people should not live together with strained relations if they are not certain of getting on with each other ; while it is a very different thing if one does not look at the individual but at the family life and the homes. This is the reason why we are told that the women in Russia have risen up against these new regulations and are petitioning from all parts of the Empire. With those quickly-working intuitions that God has given them they recognise what a menace all this means to family life and the homes they love.

Christian marriage is not merely the joining of two people together to consummate their love and live for each other, but it is the setting up of another family and the founding of another home. Divorce, on the contrary, not only separates two people who wish no longer to live together, but it destroys the family and its home. Communism considers that all this is a much narrower view than that which they take of national or community life. Surely, it is urged, it is far better to live for the whole than for the individual, to subordinate private affections for the good of the whole, and live for the

common weal. We can only live, however, as God has intended us to do, and in fulfilment of the nature with which he has endowed us.

. Suppose that a fire breaks out in a Russian village, where all the houses are, of course, of wood, what man, who is a man in the true sense of the word, would not at once endeavour to save his own family first, and then do what he could for the rest ? It is the same in the whole animal kingdom. The lion and lioness with their cubs, the fox with its little ones, the squirrels with their young, the very birds in their nests recognise and act upon these laws, in first protecting their own mates and offspring. It is a divinely implanted instinct, and I do not believe for one single instant that any community can have any long survival if ignoring it. How would life in any form, if conscious at all, have within itself the elements of survival if there were not some guiding instinct urging the claims of those to whom they have given birth ?

There is the home then as the unit of society, and now let us consider its members. At the head, of course, is the male, the breadwinner, as in the old days, going forth to fish or to hunt, to sow or reap—"Going forth to his labour until the evening"—while the female cares for the home and her young. The one family need, under such circumstances, is security, possession, proprietorship in the home, whether in the tree-tops, as in primitive humanity, or in some cave, or under our modern conditions.

The breadwinner, led by his paternal instinct, cannot be content to live from hand to mouth, but must have something to put by in case of the younger members of his family needing some special attention, in sickness or illness, or better food and nourishment; while he himself has to contemplate accident, or temporary loss of strength; and so proprietorship and capital are necessitated by home life. Again all this comes into conflict with the fundamental ideas of Communism. It may be urged, on the other hand, that it is far better that the burdens brought upon a family by sickness, accident or other mischance, should be borne by the whole community, rather than by increasing the responsibilities of the head of the family. But this would mean, of course, the official, and what head of a family would rather look to the relieving officer, with his own stipulated hours, and with his possible failure to keep an engagement, rather than to his own resources carefully prepared for the time of need?

It is a joy to him, as to his partner, to attend to his own, the sick, the suffering, the unfortunate; and neither of them would even think of any prescribed hours, for no labour for their own would be too great. Service, to parents, is not only duty, but a joy and a privilege. How can one possibly compare an official with one's nearest and dearest? Who does not know, if they have any experience of the lives of the poor, what efforts they will make to avoid aid from the public purse. What pathetic efforts will



they not make to keep their little homes together and their "few sticks" rather than go into the "house"?

The district visitor will come round and say, "Mrs. Jones, you surely will go into the house this winter before the weather becomes too severe; you will be so miserable here, and have so little food; and all is so warm and comfortable there." The vicar calls the next day to enforce the lesson, but the poor woman will make every effort to keep out of the house in spite of all they say, and preserve her little home. This is how Mother Nature has managed things from the beginning of creation, and there would not have been human survival at all had it been otherwise.

What really in the end rooted out slavery from the life of the American people, although some of its evil influence still remains? It was a simple little story written by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe called "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

I have heard in America, especially in the Southern States, the slavery of the old days painted in bright and attractive colours. The slaves worked under congenial conditions, it is claimed, as they came from hot countries. It was not good policy to overwork them any more than it is good policy to overwork cattle. They had their own quarters, where they were comfortably lodged, and where they made merry in the evenings when work was over. Their folk dances and songs are well known. In the great house the slaves were treated as, and felt themselves to be, real members of the household. Sunday was

a day of rest and a day of worship, and great religious fervour was shewn at their services. The Negro Spirituals so popular in this country show us how real and characteristic all this was. Slavery I have often heard described as something really idyllic, but "Uncle Tom's Cabin" brought out and emphasised the deadly evil that made it unsound and inhuman at its core.

When misfortune came to an estate, or for any other reason, it had to change owners and be sold, the slaves also were put up for auction, and husband and father went in one direction, mother and wife in another, and children in yet others ; and this is what happened to poor Tom in the story. The years of happiness came suddenly to an end, and his family was scattered and the cabin left as the mere ruin of a home.

It was this which so profoundly moved fathers and mothers in the United States who loved their homes and were faithful in their own family lives, and who in consequence rose up and said, "This horrible thing shall not be," and happily it came to an end.

The Soviet Government, in measuring its strength in a conflict with the families of Russia and their homes will soon show the world, if I mistake not, how puny and yet instructive to the rest of the world their efforts have been. The great strength of the vast majority of the Russian people is, as with us, the Russian love of home.

The other rock ahead for the Soviet Government, and probably their greatest hindrance up to the

present time, is our Christian religion. I have already written my chapter on the present state of religion, so I will repeat nothing from it, for I am not thinking now of religious conditions in Russia, but of what religion is in itself. It presents to us many aspects and meets many needs of our nature, as for instance in the spiritual appeal by which it brings us into communion with higher and spiritual realities, and the personal experience of God. In public worship and the Sacraments it nourishes our higher nature; encourages, inspirits and inspires. It has its strong ethical appeal also in setting before us, strengthened by the spiritual foundation, upon which it bases its claims, in calling upon us to obey the laws of man and God.

But religion, expressed in public worship, has also another very valuable influence in our human life, in giving us a real centre of unity, and thus providing a *social force* of the very highest character, drawing us more closely together than any other influence can possibly do, and reminding us perpetually as no other influence can that the interests of the governing and governed, the employer and employed, the master and the servant, the gentle and the simple, the rich and the poor, are truly and substantially one, in any well-governed and well-organised community or State.

This is the object of the Christian Church from baptism until the very end of our human life, teaching perpetually the lesson that Communists profess to teach, but do not, that "No man liveth to himself,

and no man dieth to himself," but that all our lives belong to others and to God. One in this country, deservedly looked upon as one of its foremost leading "intellectuals" and literary authorities and yet who, I believe, considers himself (certainly is so considered by others) an Agnostic, when he and I were having one of many conversations during a long sea voyage, said to me, "You may be surprised when I say that I like to be present at a baptism whenever I am asked, and it pains me sometimes to see how carelessly and perfunctorily such a service can sometimes be taken by the clergy. It appeals to me more than I can say, with my strong socialistic ideas, to see a young life brought as soon as possible into touch with the rest of humanity; for that, I suppose, is the object of the ceremony." "Yes," I said, "of course it is." It is not only baptism in the name of the Trinity, but it is receiving this child into the congregation of Christ's flock and signing him (or her) with the sign of the cross in token of the duty to be done manfully in that congregation or community to which it is thus admitted.

It is impossible to my mind, therefore, to overestimate the importance of Christian worship upon the life of any community or State, in developing one of its most important needs—its unity. I look back now upon a fairly long ministry, and I can see again in the old parish church where I was first curate, families present Sunday after Sunday, father, mother, stalwart sons, and fair daughters, and I have seen

since then the development of their family unity, intensified by their regular attendance at Divine service, with its strong appeals to everything that they associated with their home life. They have been separated far and wide in many cases, and in different parts of the world, but though no longer under one roof the family life has still maintained its hold upon their affections, and if one member of the body has suffered, all the members have suffered with it—"If one member has been honoured, all the members of the body have rejoiced with it." It at any rate calls for a little reflection just now, when we are told that family ties are weakening amongst us, and attendance at church is falling off. I am thinking now as I write, however, not so much of our own country, but of Russia, and the intense love of home her peasantry possess and their love at the same time of their Church services which they so diligently attend.

Then there is the life of the parish—for there are parishes in Russia as with us. As we look back upon that ancient division of ours coming down to us from the very earliest times, and as we read the stories and accounts of Merrie England in the old days, and the way the Church festivals were kept, and how all Holy Days began invariably with attendance at the village church, while the rest of the day was spent in recreation and amusement (the only actual survival with us of such a way of spending a Holy Day now being Christmas Day), we may well say to ourselves,

“What did not public worship do for the strengthening of parish life ? ” What a loss we suffer in these days from the fact that we can no longer as a parish worship together ?

Many years ago now, on my way to the Passion Play I came down one evening from the mountains upon a little village in Austrian Tyrol called Schwarzenberg, and just at the time the bell was ringing for vespers in the little church. It was a week-day, but people were coming down from the hillsides and along the streets in great numbers, and we heard later after supper, from the parish priest, who having heard we were there had looked in to pass the time of day with us, and have a little chat, that every single person in the village had been present at evening service except the little maid who stayed away to give us our evening meal. How gladly would we have waited had we known, rather than spoil that perfect village unity. So it must have been again and again, and is now and will still be in the time to come, in Russian villages. Everyone will be at church who can—and sometimes larger numbers outside. Is it possible to overestimate the value of this spiritual appeal to what is best in their natures when high and low, rich and poor, one with another, come together on the common ground of being in the Presence of God, and needing His help and Grace ? It was so in the early days of faith, when all sorts and conditions, even masters and slaves, thus met together, and gave us the watchwords, “Honour all men (be-

cause all men are souls) and love the brotherhood." Is it possible to think of any stronger influence making for unity than such joint spiritual experiences as these? No wonder St. Luke wrote that all this made "The multitude of them that believed of one heart and of one soul."

Let us take again not the family or social unit, not the larger unit of the parish, but the whole life of a nation or people, with a common faith and public worship and Divine service to give it expression. What an appeal this is to the national conscience, what a reminder of the national claim as compared with that of the individual. What a continual reminder that all are in a particular country because the providence of God has placed them there and all are thus influenced together and given the desire to render it their service. If instead of our many divisions we had some joint consciousness of religion or common call to national consecration, what a tremendous thing this would be in promoting national *unity*. Even in individual experience religion makes its strong appeal and calls us to the desire for the sense of unity and social duty. That is, of course, its most direct claim—the personal experience of God in the human soul deepening the sense of this continually. Nothing of course can make up for the absence of this personal experience in religion. It is useless working away at the circumference in our religious duties unless one has the centre quite right. But when one is a devout Christian, when

discipleship is real, and Christ is dwelling in the heart by faith, then, when there is absolute unity within, because man is a social being and Christ's Church a social system, and because we do what we are, a man who has inward peace, promotes outward peace and concord wherever he goes. Whatever our point of view, true religion and worship, in spirit and in truth, is far and away the most powerful influence in promoting national unity ever vouchsafed to mankind.

The Soviet Government has arraigned itself and brought all the forces at its command against these two God-given instincts of our human nature—family duty and religion. They are absolutely antagonistic to Communism and have wrecked every attempt to promote it hitherto, and will do so again in Russia. They represent the very bed-rock of human nature, and we may say of it in our Lord's own words as we think of Soviet policy, "He who falls upon this stone shall be broken, but upon whom it shall fall it will grind him to powder."



## CONCLUSION

I AM well aware that some things in what I have written will be considered too hopeful and lenient a view of the Soviet rule, but I will again ask my readers to try and realise what different experiences and consequent impressions may meet those who visit Russia to-day, and that, as I have already said, different reports, which almost seem to contradict each other, may be given by different people, and yet both be true for them, and consequently for those to whom they convey them.

Sir Martin Conway, in his remarkably interesting book on the art treasures of Russia under the Soviet, was evidently entirely unprepared, like myself, for the magnificence of the collection in places like the Hermitage, and other galleries and museums, and was equally unprepared for the care and attention that are bestowed upon them by the most competent officials. He has so much to say on this his particular subject, and practically the only sphere of their operations with which he has been intimately concerned, and what he has to say is of such a thoroughly appreciative and favourable character, that he shows us very plainly at the beginning of his book that he

may even be accused of Bolshevik propaganda. Like myself, he was evidently so well treated by those members of the Administration whom he came to know, and received so much kindness from them that they impressed him as they certainly have all whom I have met and who have had close relations with them as being quite like ordinary people.

There is no getting over, nor forgetting, nor can they ever be forgotten, the awful deeds of cruelty and torture and spoliation that have been wrought in Russia in these last nine years, and under this rule, and for many of us it is one of the most difficult of things to account for them. The Patriarch when I first saw him said, evidently in the same kind of puzzled uncertainty, that he had been careful never to attack or abuse the Government as a whole, nor its individual members, but had devoted all his abhorrent condemnation to the evil and cruel deeds that had been wrought under and during their rule. I have tried, as far as I could, to follow his example in what I have written. If we do not look to the present Government of Russia, especially if Stalin is successful in his resolution to determine Russia's policy, to gradually develop into a more constitutional rule, and get more and more into line with other European countries in this respect, I do not see for my part from whence those better things which we hope and many of us pray for are to come.

Let me now, therefore, as I conclude, ask my readers just to glance back over the chapters they have read,

and while recalling in their minds those deep shadows that I have described as brooding over Russian life, and likely long I fear to remain so, think at the same time of some of those bright places which give encouragement to our hopes for Russia's future. Chief amongst those dark and oppressive shadows would I place two. (1) There is that Terror from which no Russian is free, hardly for a moment, the Tcheka, and its unlimited and irresponsible powers. They know only too well that no one is safe from it, that informers and spies are everywhere, that imprisonment for months without trial is possible for everyone, and exile to Siberia without any process of law, direct and immediate punishment following closely upon arrest, deprivation of home and possessions overtake anyone and at any time. Night and day this fear is in every mind, that most torturing consciousness of which the Apostle is thinking when he says, "Fear hath torment."

(2) There is that Class war, not only class consciousness accentuated as never before in Russia, but that venom introduced into Communistic aims which probably will never again pass from the minds of any wishing for better things in the community of which they may be members, and determined, as far as they can, to take some part in improving them. Most young and ardent minds have been kindled almost to a flame of unselfish feeling at the thought of working for the whole rather than for the individual and seeking the common good and well-being. Class war, how-

ever, with its callous want of feeling, its bitterness in bringing out the worst in humanity, is an entirely different thing, as Russia's past few years only too plainly show.

Then there are those bright places to be seen in our retrospect: (1) That attempt, and as far as we can judge, successful attempt, to bring the best things in their civilisation and possessions not only within the reach of the worker and his children, but within reach of their intelligent appreciation. At the opera and the play, at concerts and at sports, in galleries and museums one sees this one bright place amid much gloom in the Russia of to-day.

And, further, there is that hopeful and deeply moving lesson which devout and religious Russia gives to all members of the Christian Church who go there, in the noble, uncomplaining and heroic way in which it is bearing its persecution and its martyrdom. How much, that sorely needed it, in the Russia of the past will be sloughed away in these days of awful trial! How much, as a friend of mine wrote in one of our Reviews, soon after the persecution began, of Russia's rottenness will have been burnt up as by a cleansing fire, so that a new and stronger nation's life may emerge, as is always the case when sufferings are patiently and bravely borne. It is upon this vicarious suffering that some of us base our most stable and brightest hopes of the Russia that is to come.

Even a pessimist in ordinary matters going to Russia at this time and getting some knowledge of

what is really beneath the surface would permit himself, I think, to see something else than gloom in the future, but I frankly own on my part, as I believe that the world is under the protection of a good and All-wise Providence, notwithstanding all that there is to be said on the other side, I cannot but be hopeful in my general outlook. I remember in the early days of the first revolution this notice in the Press: "Bishop Bury then spoke upon Russia, and with his usual incurable optimism." Surely one would rather be incurably optimistic than gloomy and depressing. We Christians are accused, Archbishop Benson once said on a notable occasion, of pressing mere shadows upon busy people, but Faith and Hope and Love are by no means shadows, while their opposites, Unbelief, Despair and Hatred, undoubtedly are. Let us, therefore, see Russia's future in the seeking and realisation of those ideals.

During the closing months of last year I was again and again and in many parts of the country invited to speak of my Russian experiences and to audiences very varied in their character. I addressed gatherings of clergy (the London Clergy meeting me at Sion College), drawing-room meetings, representing various political associations, congregations in church, but most interesting of all, large and important gatherings in the manufacturing centres in the North of England, and men's services on Sunday afternoons, so I have come to have some definite idea of what is passing in the minds of our own people with respect to Russia, for,

except in church, I always gave full opportunity for asking questions.

In the Lancashire manufacturing towns there were much the largest audiences. Halls were crowded in every part and with numbers standing. Socialists and Communists were strongly represented—Communists, I was told, not only of an aggressive but somewhat bitter type—and yet it makes me proud of my own countrymen to say that I do not remember one single unfair question put to me, nor any attempt to hit below the belt, or to ask a question simply to put me into a difficulty. I am venturing, therefore, in my concluding words to give the substance of these questions, and my own replies.

There was a general wish in the first place to know the truth as to the wages paid to workmen in Russia, the cost of living, and the general character of their surroundings, and in every place I think I was asked how I reconciled what I had to say on these matters with the money sent over for the relief of our miners. Such a question was, of course, impossible to answer, for that is absolutely Russia's affair. It clearly suits the Soviet Government to send these large sums for propaganda purposes, and, as far as I can judge, the workmen themselves in Russia have not been consulted, and can ill afford to part with what has been deducted from their wages, and have not the least idea as to what the miners' strike has really been or how far their own conditions of life have been affected by it.

I said in almost every place that I have such respect for our own working classes and confidence in them, that I feel certain if our miners knew the real working conditions in Russia they would insist on the money being returned.

The invariable question in the manufacturing centres was connected with Communism as a social principle, and this I dealt with as I have already done in my preceding chapters, pointing out that it never had worked when tried, and never, in my judgment, could work or succeed. Not only did I disclaim any sympathy with Communism, but said the same of Socialism and nationalisation, saying that I believed that individual enterprise and responsibility were the only ways to ensure national progress, and that the less there was done to check it, especially in the way of Government interference and bureaucracy, the better, quoting in place after place what Dzherzkinsky himself had said in this connection.

It was very odd to hear in Manchester Lenin described as having a gentle and kind nature, and as being averse to human suffering in any form, and also to hear speakers, not anxious to ask questions but to give their own experiences, describing their visits to Russia and their acquaintance with members of the Soviet Government as the most inspiring experience they have ever had.

In Manchester also a very important question gave me a much better opportunity than my address had done of explaining the issue which has been raised

by the Soviet persecution of religion. The speaker, who was evidently very conversant with Russian affairs, asked why I did not agree with Lunacharsky in considering that education was only confused by introducing religion into it. The Professor had said that all that was necessary in young lives was to fit them intellectually, mentally and physically to earn their own living and make their life a success, while religion was a thing apart. When I said the Professor had left out the most important thing in training the young mind, viz., its moral character, the whole audience enthusiastically applauded. What, I asked, was the use of cleverness, ability and similar gifts if the man himself had no sense of moral responsibility, could not be believed or trusted? Why the highest form of evil with which Christians are familiarised is just Cleverness without goodness, Ability without morality; and to train boys and girls as fully and perfectly as possible in all technical, mental and intellectual matters, and leave out any appeal to their sense of duty or consciousness of moral perceptions was to run a very grave risk of ruining every bit of this influence for good and making them a danger to society. I never had an audience back me up so emphatically and enthusiastically in making such a statement as in Manchester, and I have felt ever since that I learned much more than I taught them, and received far more than I gave.

Was it true, I was also asked, that students as a class had been revolutionaries for many years



long before the war? I replied that of course anyone who knew anything of Russian affairs knew that this was so, and Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace had described more than 20 years ago all their activities, and spoken as a prophet might have done of the true results which would follow them. The students of Russia, after their magnificent university education, supported by their own visits to continental universities, were turned out in great numbers annually, yet Russia itself with its comparatively few cities and towns could give them few opportunities for using their abilities.

The result of this was the growth of a very disappointed and embittered class, and which represented the greatest possibilities of usefulness in their country. Naturally they came to desire an entirely different social state of things from that which denied them a sphere for their talents; and numerous societies were consequently formed of a revolutionary character. "Something is certainly wrong with our present state of things, when there is so much wealth in the country, so much idleness and luxury, and yet we who ask for nothing better than to work to live cannot have any such opportunities given us." The students, therefore, as a class, I believe, ever have been and still are chief amongst Russia's revolutionaries.

Krassin, however, on the other hand—perhaps it may be a type, but I have not heard of anyone else like him—was a very successful business man in the days before the war, yet he is said to have had

more influence than anyone else with Lenin. He represented neither the student nor the anarchical artisan, but the *bourgeoisie*, and had held almost all his life Communist opinions, and yet (these things are somewhat difficult to understand) he has lived just as other wealthy Russians have done all his life, given his children an expensive education, and lived not only in comfort but in luxury, and left a large fortune behind him.

In place after place, and I suppose it will be so for many years, the harsh nature of the old Tsarist Government was dwelt upon, and questions asked about it as to whether things were not much better now. I believe the Berlin newspapers have lately been describing the sad lot of exiles in Siberia under the former rule, and describing week by week the former sufferings of the convicts in the mines. I can only say again, with respect to Siberia, that things are said to be infinitely worse now than they have ever been in Russia's previous history. Every place that can accommodate prisoners is said to be full to overflowing, while the conditions of life there are perfectly indescribable. I have never myself been able to learn much of harshness or cruelty in Siberia under the old régime. Sir John Foster Fraser in his "Real Siberia," published before the war, describes the life of exiles in that vast country as being much the same as in Russia itself, except in their being confined to particular neighbourhoods. A man might disappear, it is true, taken sometimes from his place

at the Opera, for being suspected of political plotting, and be next heard of in Siberia, but he would be living in his own house there. In due time his wife and children would be able to join him, and after a few years, if he would give his word not to return, he would be allowed to leave the country.

Just before the war the Bishop of London wrote to me while I was in Russia, enclosing a pamphlet about the sufferings in Siberian prisons and Siberian mines. He said he had been asked to take the chair at a meeting to protest against these enormities, and he would like to know what I thought before he gave his reply to the statements made. I replied that I hoped he would not attend, as such meetings, especially with one of his influence and high position, were very embarrassing indeed to our diplomatic representatives, as naturally they would be told how much the Government to which they were accredited resented such attacks upon their Administration. I said I would discuss it upon my return. As soon as I was back, I went to the Russian Embassy, where the First Secretary was a friend of mine, shewed him the Bishop's letter, and told him what I had said, and asked if he did not think I was right in the advice I had given.

He answered that it was not for him to say, but he suggested that on my next visit to Russia I should go and see the convicts for myself, and that his Government would give me all facilities for doing so, and provide me with the means of reaching the different places by rail or driving. On reporting this to an

Anglo-Russian friend of mine and telling him how interesting I should feel the experience to be, he replied, "But surely you know there are no convicts in the mines of Siberia and have not been for at least 20 years. Never since dynamite was introduced, for obvious reasons, have prisoners in Siberia been sent down into the mines unless they were experienced miners and wished to do so."

As far as I have been able to learn, Russian Prisons have been of late years quite as good as those of any other country, and notably, as far as my own experience goes, better than those of France and Belgium, which I have visited, though of course our own are infinitely more human and educational than any others I know. Life in Siberia differed but little from life in Russia except, as I have said, in the loss of personal liberty, but it is sadly different now !

Things were moving, let me say it again in this concluding chapter, in every direction in Russia, and in every part of their public and social life, in the right direction ; and if it is objected that they were moving very slowly, yet it must be remembered that in such a vast country as that, slow and sure might well be quoted as being the best way of securing what was for the permanent good of the people.





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